# ‘Palestine is Thus Brought Home to England’: The Representation of Palestine in British Travel Literature, 1840-1914

Submitted by Gabriel Polley to the University of Exeter
as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Palestine Studies
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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

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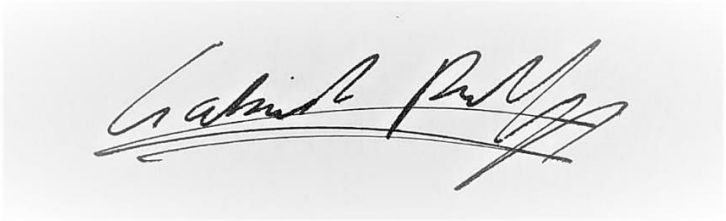

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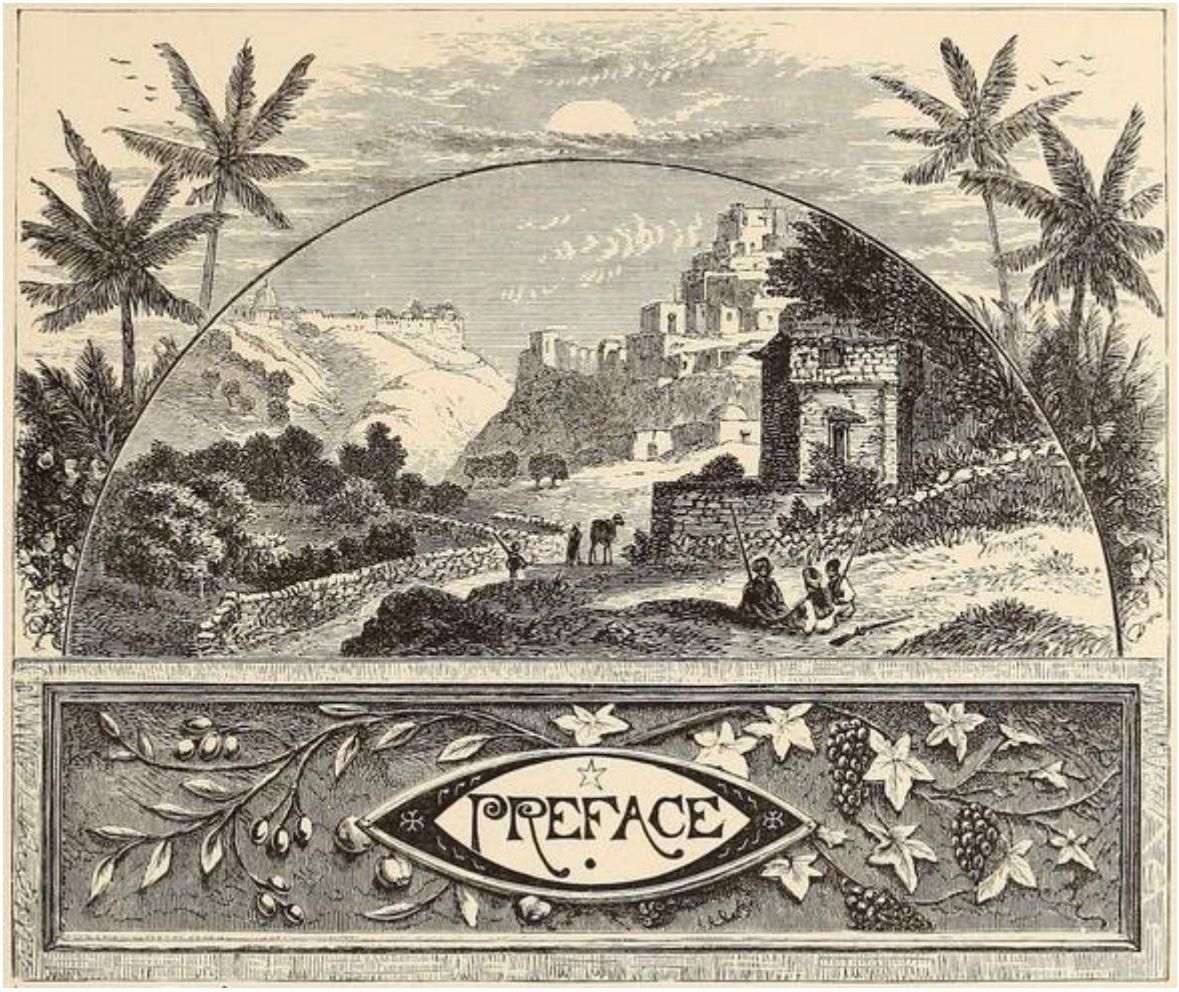


***"Those Holy Fields."* by Samuel Manning, page 5**

This thesis has been a long journey, and would not have been possible without the help and support of many friends and colleagues who have been with me from the start, or whom I have had the good fortune to meet along the way.

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(especially all the Bland Road gang), Ramallah (I cannot fail to mention Dana Abu Koash) and Amman (Jannette, Abdullah and Omar for always making us feel welcome), and from Cairo to Kurdistan.

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Most of what's good in the following pages is due to this wonderful bunch of people (and probably a few others who temporarily slipped my mind at this crazy time). The rest is my own.

## CHAPTER ONE

## 'Holy Land on the Brain': Introduction

**Figure 1.1:**
***Tadhkara* or Ottoman visa issued to travellers to Palestine**[1]

The Wednesday, 20th April 1887 edition of the London *Morning Post* featured a review of a new book of travel in Palestine. It was evidently not the first such work encountered by the reviewer, who made this clear in no uncertain terms. 'The Holy Land is in no small danger of becoming the best (or worst) described country in the world', the reviewer launched into a tirade. 'What with explorers and tourists', they claimed, 'scientific disputants of traditional topography, and "personally conducted" excursionists, there is no want of authors ready and anxious to give the public the perhaps questionable benefit of their ideas upon the past, present, and future history of the most interesting locality of the universe'.[2]

[1] Reproduced from Lewis Gaston Leary, *The Real Palestine of Today* (New York: McBride, Nast and Company, 1911), frontispiece
[2] Anonymous, "Modern Palestine", *Morning Post* (20 April 1887), p. 2

These sentences reached the heart of attitudes towards Palestine in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain – attitudes which, this thesis argues, would have a profoundly important influence on the course of history. *The most interesting locality of the universe* was how Palestine was conceptualised by Protestants swept up in the Evangelical movement; its outlook transformed the idea of Palestine as a distant Holy Land of purely spiritual significance, into a region with much more immediate physicality. Palestine's *past* was its glorious history, the sacred Biblical era of heroic Israelites and Christ's sacrifice; its *present* was its "occupation" by Islam, the Ottoman rule (which had begun in 1517) under which the country supposedly languished, threatened by multiple European empires seeking to provide an answer to the "Eastern Question"; its *future* was the prophesied "restoration" or "return" of the Jewish people to Palestine, initiating the fulfilment of all the Bible's promises. *Explorers*, such as those of the Palestine Exploration Fund founded in London in 1865, arrived to survey what they believed were Biblical remains; the *tourists* and *excursionists*, wishing to see the sacred locales familiar to them through Scripture, sermons and Sunday schools since childhood, could travel in *"personally conducted"* groups with local guides (fig. 1.2), or, for the less intrepid, on organised tours such as those led by the Derbyshire-born Baptist preacher Thomas Cook (1808-1892) beginning in 1869. Biblical scholars were the *disputants of traditional topography*, feeding on the reports of the 'explorers' to challenge the veracity of the established and previously accepted sacred sites around Palestine. These were the integral ingredients of what Western travellers named the "Peaceful Crusade", behind which lay a complex of attitudes, beliefs and ideas which one traveller-writer, Isabel Burton, summarised as 'Holy Land on the brain'.[3]

[3] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 1, p. 4

**Figure 1.2:**
**"Travellers on the River Jordan, Palestine", 1896,**
**by Underwood & Underwood,**
**from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division**

While a fascination with Palestine was felt across Western Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon settler colonies of North America, Britain was where the obsession was strongest. Since the Puritan seventeenth century, Protestant identity in Britain was intimately connected to Palestine, through the medium of the Old Testament; in the eighteenth century, Britain was the birthplace of Evangelical Protestantism; in the nineteenth century, belief in the "return" of the Jews to Palestine was widespread, articulated by prominent members of the establishment, most notably Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885).[4]

[4] Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), p. 41

When the Peaceful Crusade transformed in 1914 into the First World War, missionaries, archaeologists and tourists were replaced by British soldiers. While the strategic demands of the War, which pitted Britain against the German-allied Ottomans, considerably determined the shape of the new British intervention in Palestine, the ideological content of Britain's role over subsequent decades was determined by textual attitudes already formed, as shown throughout this thesis. Britain's relationship to Palestine underwent a profound change with its occupation of Jerusalem on 11th December 1917, shortly preceded by the government's issuing of the Balfour Declaration on 2nd November 1917, a letter to the Zionist movement promising support for 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. Travellers' attitudes from a former period were echoed in the beliefs of politicians and civil servants in Whitehall, and the actions of British officials in Jerusalem.

During the British occupation (formalised as the British Mandate for Palestine from 1923 until Britain's departure on 15th May 1948), the entry of hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants, periods of active British support for building Zionist military capabilities, and the suppression of the Palestinian national movement, led to the *Nakba* (Arabic: catastrophe) of 1948, the ethnic cleansing of Palestine by the armed forces of the Zionist movement, resulting in the establishment of the State of Israel.[5] By the end of *Nakba* (not to mention the "ongoing *Nakba*", the settler-colonial system of exclusion and expulsion which continues across historic Palestine today), 'more than half of Palestine's native population, close to 800,000 people, had been uprooted, 531 villages had been destroyed, and eleven urban neighbourhoods emptied of their inhabitants'.[6] The *Nakba* permeates every aspect of Palestinians' existence, millions today residing in refugee camps outside their homeland, and millions more living under military occupation in the Palestinian territories captured by Israel in 1967, and as second-class citizens within Israel. As the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said poignantly wrote, 'today Palestine does not exist, except as a memory, or, more importantly, as an idea, a political and human experience, and an act of sustained popular will'.

[5] See Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate* (London: Abacus, 2001), p. 5
[6] Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), p. xiii

The last decades of Ottoman rule, rather than a passive prelude to the subsequent momentous changes in Palestine's history, were the beginning of a watershed. Changes which accelerated after 1917 had their origins in this period. Throughout these decades, a large majority of Palestine's population were rural villagers, the *fellahin* which, as Said notes, 'identified itself with the land it tilled'.[7] Most were Muslim, with a significant Christian minority; in some towns lived a proportionately small number of Jews, constituting the Old *Yishuv* (Hebrew: community). Western colonial powers' attention was drawn to Palestine by Napoleon's attempted invasion of 1799, in the course of which he issued a proclamation to the world's Jews promising the creation of a Jewish state.[8] Napoleon was defeated with British naval aid off 'Akka on Palestine's northern Mediterranean coast, but Ottoman rule remained vulnerable. From 1831 to 1840, Palestine was occupied by Egypt, under the leadership of Mohammad 'Ali (1769-1849) who, with French support, attempted to pass centralising and modernising reforms; these proved unpopular in Palestine among the *fellahin*, leading to an uprising in 1834.[9] British aid once again helped reaffirm Ottoman control in 1840, though the reforms which European powers demanded of the Ottoman Empire allowed increasing European influence in Palestine.[10] Britain took the lead in the political contest over Palestine, building its influence through diplomatic and missionary institutions. With the British Consulate in Jerusalem, established in 1838, extending its protection over Jews in the city, Evangelical missionary organisations with their headquarters in London simultaneously worked, without significant success, at converting them to Protestantism, believing this to be part of prophecy's fulfilment.[11]

Comparative stability after 1840 facilitated the Peaceful Crusade and travel to the region; it also led to the arrival of European settlers who intended to stay for longer, believing that, despite the presence of its native population who were overwhelmingly engaged in subsistence agriculture, Palestine possessed untapped agricultural possibilities. The most significant of these efforts, of greatest import for Palestine's

[7] Edward Said, "The Idea of Palestine in the West", *MERIP Reports*, No. 70 (September 1978), 3-11, p. 3
[8] Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, pp. 50-51
[9] 'Adel Manna', "Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Rebellions in Palestine", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Autumn 1994), 51-66, pp. 60-61
[10] For Britain's role in the *Tanzimat* reform process of 1839 to 1876, see Ussama Makdisi, *The Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 52
[11] Alexander Scholch, "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn 1992), 39-56

history and the experiences of the Palestinian people, was the Zionist movement. Amid anti-Semitic pogroms in the Russian Empire, the First *Aliyah* (Hebrew: rising, referring to Jewish immigration into Palestine) saw the arrival of around 15,000 Zionist settlers into Palestine from the early 1880s until 1904; the Second *Aliyah* saw the number of settlers rise to 30,000 by 1914, despite restrictions on Jewish immigration imposed by the Ottomans subsequently removed by the British.[12] This body of Jewish settlers, constituting a New *Yishuv*, had little in common with the Old *Yishuv*, establishing agricultural colonies and (particularly those of the Second *Aliyah*) desiring to create a "pure settlement colony", entirely divorced from the indigenous society in Palestine.[13] As Chapters Six and Eleven in this thesis show, British travellers were not divorced from the nascence of settler colonialism in Palestine, though they sometimes viewed it ambiguously. Believing that the Ottoman Empire was destined for disintegration, and expecting the Jews' Biblical "return" to Palestine, many travellers began to ponder what benefit a Jewish colony in the Eastern Mediterranean might hold for the British Empire. Chief among these was Laurence Oliphant, author of the book reviewed in the *Morning Post* article with which this introduction began.

These books form the subject of the following thesis. The travelogues authored by those visitors, in the acerbic terms of the *Morning Post* reviewer, 'ready and anxious' to relate their Palestine travels to all who would listen (or read), were no mere by-product of the Peaceful Crusade: in many respects, they were at its heart. As if to explain the rationale behind this genre, Claude Reigner Conder, one of the most significant travellers associated with the Palestine Exploration Fund, asserted that 'Palestine is thus brought home to England, and the student may travel, in his study, over its weary roads and rugged hills without an ache, and may ford its dangerous streams, and pass through its malarious plains without discomfort'.[14] The number of European publications on Palestine was vast. Academics have indicated over 5000 travel works on Palestine appearing in Europe from 1800 to 1877, with almost 1000 published in Britain alone from 1877 to 1914; the number may be significantly higher. With Palestine and Egypt forming the most popular literary subjects of any region in the Middle East, Palestine was, as the reviewer stated, simultaneously the 'best' and

[12] Arthur Ruppin, "Twenty-Five Years of Palestine: A Résumé of Jewish Effort and Achievement" in Meyer W. Weisgal (ed.), *Theodor Herzl: A Memorial* (New York: The New Palestine, 1929), 195-210, p. 209
[13] Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach" in Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London: Routledge, 1999), 72-85, p. 76
[14] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1880 [1878]), p. xii

the 'worst' described part of the globe, with a huge volume of material written, yet much of this being of dubious quality.[15]

The Palestine travelogue genre was one of the major contributors to the West's view of Palestine. Like the general Orientalist discourse on the Islamic world, the specific discourse on Palestine was textual in nature, its message determined by a constant flow of literature. Contained within these pages – often hundreds of pages per title, spread across two or more volumes, sometimes updated and supplemented across numerous editions – was not a Palestine very recognisable to the native people who resided there and tilled its soil, but a Palestine of the Western traveller-writers' own collective imagination, subject to a myriad of intertextual influences, and which influenced and reinforced the views of subsequent travellers. This version of Palestine 'brought home to England' and disseminated into bookshops and libraries, studies and drawing-rooms, expressed the values of Evangelical Britain and the requirements of Empire. Its representation of Palestine was uneven, preferencing certain periods of Palestine's history, groups of people, and places, and glossing over or entirely obscuring others. In only very rare cases were Palestinians themselves allowed a voice within the West's hegemonic textual productions. To paraphrase the words of Marx, quoted by Said, they were not permitted to represent themselves; they had to be represented.[16]

While many of these titles are today likely almost entirely forgotten, and many others only read by a small number of researchers and those with a die-hard interest in nineteenth-century Biblical archaeology, this thesis argues that the genre of texts has had a profound influence on Palestine's history.[17] The discourse embodied in the

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[15] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 95-96. See also Reinhold Röhricht, *Bibliotheca Geographica Palaestinae. Chronologisches Verzeichnis der auf die Geographie des Heiligen Landes Bezüglichen Literatur von 333 bis 1878* (Berlin: Reuther, 1890); Richard Bevis, *Bibliotheca Cisorientalia: An Annotated Checklist of Early English Travel Books on the Near and Middle East* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1973)

[16] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. xii

[17] The entry of many of the travelogues discussed in this thesis into the public domain, and their free availability after being scanned and uploaded on the Internet, seems to have led to a new lease of life for these dusty Victorian and Edwardian tomes, demonstrating a continued interest in their contents. For instance, on the website of the Internet Archive in late December 2019, different editions of the perennial favourite Alexander Kinglake's *Eothen* had 11,647 views, with an audiobook recording with an additional 10,394 listens; Arthur Penrhyn Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with their History* had 9,245 views; Mary Eliza Roger's *Domestic Life in Palestine* had 5,287 views; Henry Baker Tristram's *The Land of Israel* had 6,899 views; John Macgregor's *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* had 9,583 views; the two volumes of Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine* had a total of 8,666 views; Oliphant's *The Land of Gilead* had 4,805 views; and the first three volumes of *Picturesque Palestine* had 10,879 views.
Other works have remained more obscure. In addition to lesser-known works which have not yet been digitised, David Morison Ross's *The Cradle of Christianity* had mustered 210 views, Alexander Boddy's *Days in Galilee* 338 views, and Frederick Treves's *The Land That Is Desolate* 298 views. https://archive.org (accessed 30/12/19)

travelogues, and to a substantial extent created by them, has defined a view of Palestine held by many over generations in Britain and the wider West, and among supporters of Zionist settler colonialism and political and academic elites in Israel. In a key period of Palestine's modern history, a textual image of Palestine and its people held in the pages of hundreds of travel narratives took on a life off the page, becoming actualised in the attitudes, beliefs and choices of two classes of colonisers, the British and the Zionist movement.

This thesis aims to define what that image was, and what its influence has been, through posing four questions: how was the Palestinian people represented by British traveller-writers? How was the land of Palestine itself represented? How did these representations serve to advance a colonial, or settler-colonial, claim upon Palestine? And how have they influenced subsequent colonial and settler colonial ideologies and practices, specifically those of the British Mandate administration and the Zionist movement before 1948, and the State of Israel afterwards? To answer these questions, this thesis reviews a selection of around forty travelogues on Palestine produced from 1840 to 1914 by British traveller-writers, in addition to a range of supporting material relating to Palestine travel. Following the literature review, including theoretical sections on Orientalism and Zionism, and the methodology, eight chapters thematically analyse discrete aspects of the Palestine travelogues.

Chapters Four to Seven address travellers' representation of the inhabitants of Palestine and their faiths. Chapter Four investigates representation of the Muslim *fellahin* and Islam; Chapter Five, Christians and the non-Western sects of Christianity travellers encountered in Palestine; Chapter Six, Jews (including the early Zionist settlers) and Judaism; and Chapter Seven, smaller indigenous religious and social communities, the Bedouin, Druze and Samaritans.

The next three chapters focus upon the representation of the land. Chapter Eight reviews travellers' representation of Palestine as a land of the past, particularly the Judeo-Christian Holy Land. Chapter Nine covers their representation of the Palestine of their present in the late Ottoman era, particularly rural landscapes. Chapter Ten shifts attention to urban environments; after a review of travellers' depictions of towns and cities around Palestine, special focus is given to two interesting case studies, the towns of Nablus and Haifa.

Chapter Eleven analyses manifestations of colonialism in the texts, both British metropolitan colonial desire for Palestine and representations of settler-colonial

projects. Two such projects in particular are inspected which had an intimate connection with the Peaceful Crusade and British traveller-writers, as well as a significant influence on subsequent settler colonial practices: the Kerem Avraham farm for Jews, established in 1854 by the British Consul in Jerusalem James Finn; and Oliphant's plan for a Jewish colony east of the Jordan, as propounded in his *The Land of Gilead*. Throughout the thesis, aspects of the travelogues are juxtaposed with the attitudes and activities of later British and Zionist colonisers, in an attempt to begin to demonstrate the influence which the travellers of the Victorian and Edwardian eras had on the tragedies afflicting the Palestinian people in their recent history, and their part in formulating the Palestine question as it stands today, a question to which Chapter Twelve's conclusion is dedicated.

# CHAPTER TWO

## 'Perforce the Student of Other Books on Jerusalem': Literature Review[1]

This chapter contains a literature review of some of the academic research on the historical period in Palestine and the main theoretical concepts guiding my approach. The first section investigates research on Western involvement and travel to Palestine in the late Ottoman period, and the formation of travellers' discourse. Parts two and three approach their subjects more theoretically. The second part raises some key questions on Western travel literature and its relationship with colonialism and empire, before moving to consider Orientalism, a discourse specific to the West's encounter with "the Orient", in particular the Arab and Muslim world. The final section presents an analysis of Zionism, considering the historical part played by Evangelical Christians in the West in its ideological development, and conceptualises Zionism as a form of settler colonialism.

[1] The quotation in this chapter title is taken from Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), p. v

## I: 'The Roots of the Balfour Policy': Palestine and the Colonial Gaze in the Late Ottoman Era

A vast amount has been written, and continues to be written, viewing Palestine in the last decades of Ottoman rule through the prism of Western interest in the area. Much of the literature has adopted the perspective that growing Western involvement, European settler colonisation such as the German Templar colonies, and ultimately the arrival of Zionist settlers, brought progress to an otherwise hopelessly backwards region which would have been incapable of advancement by itself.[2] Epitomising this view is the prominent Israeli historian of Ottoman-era Palestine Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, whose tellingly-titled *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* begins with this passage:

> At the beginning of the 19th century Palestine was but a derelict province of the decaying Ottoman Empire. […] The country was badly governed, having no political importance of its own, its economy was primitive, the sparse, ethnically mixed population subsisted on a dismally low standard; the few towns were small and miserable; the roads few and neglected. In short, Palestine was but a sad backwater of a crumbling empire – a far cry from the fertile, thriving land it had been in ancient times.[3]

This kind of history – encountered only marginally less overtly in Naomi Shepherd's *The Zealous Intruders*, similarly subtitled *The Western Rediscovery of Palestine*, and a continuous slew of articles, books and collections by Israeli and Western Orientalist historians – has placed Western travellers centre stage.[4] Eitan Bar-Yosef has critiqued this '"Historical Geography" school of Israeli academia', as 'more descriptive than analytical […] and shaped by an explicitly Zionist–Eurocentric agenda'.[5] Such a view as Ben-Arieh's is essentially lifted unchanged from the accounts of nineteenth-century

[2] See Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Modernization as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (May 1997), 25-48

[3] Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979), p. 11

[4] Naomi Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders: The Western Rediscovery of Palestine* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987). See also (for example) Moshe Ma'oz (ed.), *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1975); Moshe Davis (ed.), *With Eyes Toward Zion: Scholars Colloquium on America-Holy Land Studies* (New York: Arno Press, 1977) and subsequent volumes of the series; and, for a more recent sample, Ruth Kark, "Ottoman Jaffa; From Ruin to Central City in Palestine" in Martin Peilstöcker and Aaron A. Burke (eds.), *The History and Archaeology of Jaffa 1* (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press at UCLA, 2011), 129-136

[5] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 5

travellers. A Eurocentric outlook on Palestine has led to Western travel narratives, despite their clear biases, being treated as reliable evidence; as Israeli historian Nathan Schur claims in an essay on travel accounts, 'travel books and itineraries are, in spite of their many limitations and shortcomings, potentially the most important type of source material we have at our disposal on the history of Palestine in the Ottoman period'.[6] Like the primary travellers' accounts, this historical representation of Palestine minimises the presence of the Palestinians, and in its worst cases reduces history to a politicised project countering the Palestinian narrative and substantiating Zionism's myths.

Eurocentric histories whose authors ascribe to a linear concept of "progress", have attempted to define the late Ottoman period as one bookended by Western conquests, and during which the defining factor shaping Palestinian history was Western interest and involvement. Ben-Arieh again epitomises this, writing in his *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century* (a book the *hasbara* [Hebrew: propaganda] status of which is underlined by its publication by the Israeli Ministry of Defence) that 'Napoleon's invasion of Eretz Israel [Hebrew: the Land of Israel, referring to the geographic space of Palestine], which took place in 1799 [… w]as the date which brought the message to the Middle East that now was the time for it to awaken from the enforced sleep of centuries'.[7] Ilan Pappe notes that 'in this view, Palestine left the past behind with the help of the West. With Europe's magic touch it was exposed to enlightenment and progress'.[8] Palestinian historians in particular have appealed for a "rebalancing" of our understanding of the Ottoman era; as Beshara Doumani has written, there is a need for a fresh look at a period 'historiographically overdetermined as the era of western-inspired modernity'.[9] In his article "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians Into History", Doumani traces this deficiency to travel literature, which displayed a 'lack of interest in the history of the people' who lived in

[6] Nathan Schur, "Itineraries by Pilgrims and Travelers as Source Material for the History of Palestine in the Ottoman Period" in David Kushner (ed.), *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social and Economic Transformation* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1986), 382-401

[7] Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Defence Books, 1989), p. 9. The critical Israeli sociologist Baruch Kimmerling has critiqued the use of the Jewish religious term Eretz Israel by Israeli historians, writing that through its use, 'the historian grants the Jews an eternal tide over the territory, regardless of who populated or governed it, even in a situation when the "legitimate ownership" of the land was under dispute'. "Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Case of Israeli-Jewish Historiography", *History and Memory*, Vol. 7, No. 1, *Israeli Historiography Revisited* (Spring/Summer 1995), 41-65, p. 48

[8] Ilan Pappe, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 5-6

[9] Beshara Doumani, "Introduction" in Angelos Dalachanis and Vincent Lemire (eds.), *Ordinary Jerusalem, 1840-1940: Opening New Archives, Revisiting a Global City* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 139-142, p. 139

Palestine, and revealed travellers' 'amazing ability to discover the land without discovering the people', a selectivity which 'dovetailed neatly with early Zionist visions'.[10] In addition to Doumani, historians such as Michelle Campos, Salim Tamari, Mahmoud Yazbak and many others, and collections such as the 2018 *Ordinary Jerusalem, 1840-1940*, have produced research far broadening the portrait of Ottoman Palestinian society, in which the positions occupied by the West and travellers are marginal.[11] In recent years, further research has begun to restore to light subaltern Palestinians whose lives were intimately connected to Western travel, but were largely obscured in travellers' accounts: Rachel Mairs' *From Khartoum to Jerusalem* focuses on a Palestinian guide (as a body discussed in this thesis in Chapter Five) to European and American tourists, while Sarah Irving's paper "A Tale of Two Yusifs" investigates the lives of two local workers on Palestine Exploration Fund excavations.[12]

Nevertheless, these welcome trends in research should not obscure the significance of the West's activity in Palestine in the nineteenth century. As this thesis hopes to demonstrate, research focusing upon Western views of Palestine does not have to adopt a Eurocentric framework, accept Western accounts unproblematically, or obscure the existing indigenous society. Abdul Latif Tibawi, among the earliest Palestinian historians to explicitly focus upon British activity in the late Ottoman period in his *British Interests in Palestine, 1800-1901: A Study of Religious and Educational Enterprise*, chronicled the steady growth of the British presence through diplomatic and missionary activity.[13] Alexander Scholch demonstrated the extent to which the region was drawn into the world economy in *Palestine in Transformation, 1856-1882*.[14] In his paper "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882", Scholch identified the period as

[10] Beshara Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians into History," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 21, No. 2 (Winter, 1992), 5-28, pp. 6, 9

[11] See Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2011); Salim Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea: Essays on Palestinian Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Mahmoud Yazbak, "Nabulsi Ulama in the Late Ottoman Period, 1864-1914*", International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 1997), 71-91; Dalachanis and Lemire (eds.)*, Ordinary Jerusalem, 1840-1940*

[12] Rachel Mairs, *From Khartoum to Jerusalem: The Dragoman Solomon Negima and his Clients (1884-1933)* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016); Sarah Irving, "A Tale of Two Yusifs: Recovering Arab Agency in Palestine Exploration Fund Excavations 1890-1924", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, Vol. 149, No. 3 (2017), 223-236

[13] Abdul Latif Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine, 1800-1901: A Study of Religious and Educational Enterprise* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961)

[14] Alexander Scholch, *Palestine in Transformation, 1856-1882: Studies in Social, Economic and Political Development* (Berkeley: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1993)

containing 'the roots of the Balfour policy'.[15] An important aspect of Britain's ambitions for Palestine, the development of colonisation plans, was addressed by Albert Montefiore Hyamson (1875-1954), an Anglo-Jewish historian and Mandate immigration official (initially supportive of Zionism, Hyamson aroused Zionists' ire through sticking resolutely to British rules and later became a campaigner for a binational solution for Palestine), in his article "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine".[16] While Hyamson's paper takes a strongly propagandistic tone, asserting Zionism's supposed heritage in Britain similarly to texts discussed below in this literature review, it includes useful information on settler colonisation plans devised in the nineteenth century, including by traveller-writers discussed in Chapter Eleven.[17] It is surprising that Hyamson's century-old article has not been followed with significant further research in English-language academia.

The period preceding the First World War and British occupation of Palestine in 1917 laying the groundwork for the British government's promise to the Zionist movement, Britain's role after 1917 was decisive in ensuring Zionism's rise to power in Palestine until the *Nakba* and declaration of the Jewish state in 1948. This is important for this thesis, which seeks an explanation for the Mandate's policies towards Arabs, Jews and the Palestine question in the attitudes of earlier travellers. Tom Segev's *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate* provides an antidote to the narrative of right-wing Zionism, quintessentially expressed by the Mandate-era terrorist and subsequent Israeli leader Menachem Begin (1913-1992) in *The Revolt*, in which Britain appears as an ally of the Arabs against a Jewish national liberation movement.[18] Segev asserts that

> the British kept their promise to the Zionists [made in the Balfour Declaration]. They opened up the country to mass Jewish immigration; by 1948, the Jewish population had increased by more than tenfold. […] Contrary to the widely held belief of Britain's pro-Arabism, British actions considerably favoured the Zionist enterprise.[19]

[15] Alexander Scholch, "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn 1992), 39-56
[16] See Cecil Roth, "Albert Montefiore Hyamson (President of the Jewish Historical Society of England, 1945-7; Honorary Editor of Publications, 1944-1954)", *Transactions (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 18 (1953-55), 295-296; Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate* (London: Abacus, 2001), pp. 228, 245
[17] Albert M. Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine", *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 26 (1918), 127-164
[18] Menachem Begin, *The Revolt* (London: W.H. Allen, 1952)
[19] Segev, *One Palestine, Complete*, p. 5

Returning to the Peaceful Crusade, a mass of literature has covered the specifics of Western travel to Palestine in the late Ottoman era, some of which is drawn upon to enhance this thesis's analysis of travelogues.[20] The remainder of this literature review focuses upon critical works interrogating processes through which views on Palestine in the West were shaped and a discourse established by travellers, and also considers the influence and legacies of this discourse. The impetus behind many of these works was provided by the revolution in the study of East-West relations sparked by Said's *Orientalism* in the late 1970s, discussed fully in the following section. Most of the interesting and critical research – fundamentally unlike the 'historical geography' of Israeli and pro-Zionist Orientalists – has drawn upon *Orientalism*'s methodology, or found itself in dialogue with the work.

A noteworthy though today (unjustly) obscure book dating shortly prior to Said's contribution is *The Arabs and the English* by Sari J. Nasir, a Palestinian refugee and lecturer at the University of Jordan. Nasir's work mentions a number of travellers discussed in this thesis, and asserts changing British attitudes towards Arabs based on political factors such as the rise of and ideological/strategic alliance with the Zionist movement: for example, while 'the desert and the Bedouin seemed to have captured the imagination of the British', on the other hand 'a hostile attitude […] developed towards the urban dwellers, who were represented as debased, corrupt and dangerous'. Ending with a call for future scholars to investigate the West's representation of the Arabs 'for it is through such studies that we shall be better able to understand the ways in which peoples perceive one another', Nasir's study nevertheless lacks some of the theoretical depth of later scholarship.[21]

Billie Melman's *Women's Orients: English Woman and the Middle East, 1718-1918* contains a far more complex analysis of the texts of travellers to Palestine than the works of Israeli scholars preceding her. Melman argues for the incorporation of lessons of gender studies into a reading of travel texts, presenting a critique of post-Said interpretations of Orientalist discourse:

[20] See, for example, Doren Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage: The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (April 2003), 131-148; Norman Bentwich, "Anglo-Jewish Travellers to Palestine in the Nineteenth Century", *Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 4 (1942), 9-19; Edmund Bosworth, "The Land of Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period as Mirrored in Western Guide Books", *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1986), 36-44; Sabrina Joseph, "Britain's Social, Moral, and Cultural Penetration of Palestine: British Travelers in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine and their Perception of the Jews", *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 1995), 45-67; David Kushner, "Zealous Towns in Nineteenth-Century Palestine", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (July 1997), 597-612

[21] Sari J. Nasir, *The Arabs and the English* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1976), pp. 118, 162

> Europe's attitude towards the Orient was neither unified nor monolithic. Nor did it progress (or regress) linearly. Nor did it necessarily derive from a binary division sharply dividing the world into asymmetrical oppositions: male-female; West-East, white-non-white and Christian-Muslim […]. I argue that in the eighteenth century there emerged an alternative view of the Orient, which developed, during the nineteenth century, alongside the dominant one. The new view, which is expressed in diverse images that are in many ways more complex than the orientalist *topos*, is found in the mammoth body of writings by women travellers to and residents in, the Middle East and which so far have received very little attention.[22]

Melman argues that women travellers to Palestine presented a different view of Palestine than their male counterparts, partly because of their access to domestic and female spaces. Other scholars have challenged Melman's argument, Nancy Stockdale reasserting 'English women's complicity in replicating popular and Orientalist stereotypes about Palestine [and] their activities to further British imperial control over the country and its population'.[23] Owing to lack of space, gender is not a primary analytical category in this thesis; however, the work of Melman, Stockdale and others suggests an increasing diversity of pathways for future research on the West and Palestine.

Perhaps the most sophisticated and challenging analysis of Britain's cultural encounter with Palestine is Bar-Yosef's *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917*. Bar-Yosef's mission is 'to reveal the various cross-exchanges between the imperial project of exploring, representing, and eventually conquering Palestine and between the long tradition of internalising those central biblical images – "Promised Land", "Chosen People", "Zion" – and applying them to England and the English'. Somewhat against the grain of much preceding research, including both Said's *Orientalism* and the traditional Zionist narrative (politically opposed as they are), Bar-Yosef argues that what defined British attitudes towards Palestine were often not Orientalist images or Christian Zionist expectations, but instead deeply-rooted traditions equating England with Palestine. Two chapters have special relevance for this thesis. In "The Land and

[22] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918: Sexuality, Religion and Work* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), p. 7
[23] Nancy L. Stockdale, *Colonial Encounters among English and Palestinian Women, 1800-1948* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), p. 9

the Books: High Anglo-Palestine Orientalism and its Limits", Bar-Yosef presents the case for a limited social impact of the Palestine travelogues: 'remarkably high prices, leading to surprisingly low circulation figures (often no more than several hundred copies), meant that only a tiny fraction of society was exposed, directly, to these travel accounts'. If working-class people could not afford to purchase books of travel to Palestine, still less could they afford to travel themselves. 'Travel to Jerusalem […] was essentially a middle-class phenomenon, which seldom extended to the lower middle class', except for domestic servants sometimes accompanying travellers, who as Bar-Yosef notes were often made invisible in travel writing, 'a middle-class genre *par excellence*'. Bar-Yosef concludes that 'most English men and women […] were not exposed, at least not directly, to the language and imagery of this […] Anglo-Palestine Orientalist discourse'. More relevant were not accounts based on first-hand observation of Palestine, but popular images of 'the golden land of pure delight or [John] Bunyan's Jerusalem' from the seventeenth-century Puritan writer's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.[24]

Bar-Yosef's contribution warns against imagining that the discourse contained in the Palestine travelogues was an influence on and representative of broad sections of opinion. My approach in this thesis has responded to this: I focus on the possible influence of the travellers' discourse on elites and on Israeli state policies. To borrow terms from critical discourse analysis, discussed in the next chapter on methodology, I focus upon a broadly-defined group which can be termed a 'power elite', including upper middle- to upper-class traveller-writers in the Peaceful Crusade; the British social and political elite in terms of attitudes towards Palestine partly manifested in British Mandate policies; and the elite of the Zionist movement who exerted influence upon the movement's direction. These circles had the greatest 'access' to the generation of discourse.[25] Bar-Yosef also calls into question the received narrative of the development of Zionism in Britain, as discussed below in this chapter.

Palestinian scholars over the last two decades have made insightful interventions on the topic of Western travellers. Issam Nassar has provided an analysis of pilgrim and travel accounts until the nineteenth century, and the subsequent photographic representation of Jerusalem, in his *European Portrayals of*

[24] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, pp. 4, 14, 65, 102, 104
[25] See Teun A. van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis", *Discourse & Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, *SPECIAL ISSUE: Critical Discourse Analysis* (1993), 249-283, pp. 255, 256

*Jerusalem: Religious Fascinations and Colonialist Imaginations*. Inverting the assertion that Western travelogues form a reliable body of evidence for Palestine in the Ottoman era, Nassar writes that travel texts'

> importance lies […] in the fact that they contributed significantly to the construction of certain historical imaginations. By including and highlighting certain historical events, while excluding others, nineteenth century travel writers were actively producing and reproducing certain discourses on Jerusalem. Travel narratives can tell the critical reader quite a bit about their authors and can reveal the reasons why authors chose to leave out certain events related to the history they narrate.

Ultimately, in the case of Palestine, 'historical imagination paves the way toward actual colonisation'.[26] Nassar's study limits its focus to Jerusalem; in a short chapter, "The Invention of the Holy Land", Elias Sanbar expands this idea to Palestine as a whole. Sanbar writes that in the West's view, 'Palestine had been prepared to receive a historic- religious ideology according to which it belonged to a people chosen thousands of years earlier who were bearers of an exclusive right of property from a divine source'. While this should not be reduced to 'a plot, a Machiavellian plan cooked up by "foreigners" practicing a kind of prelude to Zionism', there was nevertheless a 'conjunction of a desire for imperial conquest and a discourse strongly anchored in Anglican Protestantism, which asserted its faith as the fulfilment – a kind of "superior form" – of Judaism for "the greater glory," not of God but of Victorian England'.[27]

Basem Ra'ad has made a thought-provoking contribution on nineteenth-century Western travel literature in his *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean*. Considering the Israeli government's use of travel writing to confirm Zionist narratives, as discussed in the penultimate chapter and conclusion of this thesis, Ra'ad makes a counterintuitive yet illuminating argument, "reclaiming" the travelogues as documents which can, perhaps, complexify the standard Eurocentric view of late Ottoman Palestine. Ra'ad considers two prominent American literary travellers, Herman Melville (1819-1891) and Mark Twain (1835-1910), arguing that their writings on Palestine (including Twain's continuously popular travelogue

[26] Issam Nassar, *European Portrayals of Jerusalem: Religious Fascinations and Colonialist Imaginations* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), pp. 150, 155
[27] Elias Sanbar, "The Invention of the Holy Land" in Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 292-296, p. 293

*Innocents Abroad*) have been retrospectively misinterpreted, 'their insights […] lost in the wave of the most recent fundamentalism and Zionism'. Ra'ad challenges the texts' (ab)use by pro-Israel historians:

> It is totally misguided and intentionally deceptive to adhere to [the] common tactic of using isolated quotations from Twain, Melville or others to support the Zionist claims about Palestine being desolate and barren until the Zionists came to plant and make it green. Some ill-intentioned travellers were indeed biblically obsessed and pre-disposed to hate "Arabs". But that does not apply to Melville and Twain, nor can their views about the land or the people be employed that way except by distorting them and placing them out of context.

Ra'ad notes, as a 'corrective testimony', Melville's observation that 'all who cultivate the soil in Palestine are Arabs', contradicting commonly-made claims that before the arrival of Zionism Palestine was barren.[28] Whilst this thesis argues that almost all travel writing was imbued with Orientalist and racist discourse, making the travelogues highly unreliable sources, nevertheless sometimes contradictions between travellers' accounts tell a more interesting story, as discussed in Chapter Nine regarding the land.

Finally, Italian scholar Lorenzo Kamel has focused upon the connections between the nineteenth-century English fascination with Palestine and the later will to colonise it. In "The Impact of 'Biblical Orientalism' in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", Kamel identifies a specific variety of Orientalism behind the Palestine Exploration Fund and the tours of Thomas Cook, seeking to impose 'the idea of a "meta-Palestine", an imaginary place devoid of any history except that of Biblical magnificence'. He asserts that, in the West's rush to accumulate knowledge on Palestine, 'an overwhelming proportion of the approaches and actions adopted at the time were the products of an attempt to (mis)appropriate the Biblical past for political and imperial purposes'. Of the PEF's activity in particular, Kamel writes that 'the interpretation of the meaning and of the history of Palestine that was revealed […] was quickly transformed into a tool for the legitimisation of British political claims on the Holy Land'.[29] Kamel expands upon these ideas in his *Imperial Perceptions of Palestine: British Influence and Power in Late Ottoman Times*, accusing the British of

[28] Basem L. Ra'ad, *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean* (London and New York: Pluto Press, 2010), pp. 82, 83

[29] Lorenzo Kamel, "The Impact of 'Biblical Orientalism' in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", *New Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 4 (2014), 1-15, pp. 1, 2, 8

a ‘simplification’ of the Palestinian people in order to justify Britain’s claims to domination, a ‘tendency to define, indeed rationalise, the other in terms more suitable, comprehensible and useful to the self’.[30] While Kamel does not draw upon travellers’ texts, his work sheds light on the ways in which British attitudes translated into colonial policies.

Late Ottoman Palestine, then, has been well-studied, particularly through the paradigm of Western and British involvement, with travellers being prominent though coming under increasingly critical scrutiny in recent decades. Yet there has been an unoccupied space for a book-length investigation of the representation of Palestine and the Palestinians in British travelogues, and the parallels between travellers’ views and later colonial and settler-colonial policies. As shown next, this study will be aided by theoretical insights into travel writing, Orientalism, Zionism and settler colonialism.

[30] Lorenzo Kamel, *Imperial Perceptions of Palestine: British Influence and Power in Late Ottoman Times* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), p. 1

## II: 'A Long Series of European Encounters': Travel Writing and Orientalism

Over the past decades, critics informed by postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian critique of knowledge and power have problematised Western travel literature and its claim to "objectively" represent particularly non-Western parts of the world. The work of these critics has informed the basic guiding principle of this work, that travelogues cannot be considered as impartial reflections of Palestine, but instead as documents subjected to intertextual influences, political considerations and cultural attitudes deeply inscribed on traveller-writers' choices of language. Some have gone so far as to challenge the existence of a discrete genre of travel writing. Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan have described travel writing as 'a hybrid genre that straddles categories and disciplines'.[31] Travel writing has been influenced by and appropriated elements from a large array of other non-fiction genres, including ethnography, journalism and memoir, and fiction too, as Barbara Korte and Tim Youngs have noted.[32] These insights have been valuable for this thesis, which addresses questions of intertextuality in Chapter Eight.

Academics have also problematised issues of (mis)representation, deriving from the traveller's ambiguous status. According to Michael Kowaleski, 'a crucial element of all travel writing remains the author's "visitor" status. He or she remains, as the reader's surrogate, a cultural outsider who moves into, through and finally beyond the places and events encountered'.[33] In the words of James Duncan and Derek Gregory in the introduction to their *Writes of Passage*, travel writing involves 'the translation of one place into the cultural idiom of another', involving the loss of 'some of the symbolic loading of the place for its [indigenous] inhabitants and [its replacement] with other symbolic values'.[34] As this thesis demonstrates, this process occurred in practically all the writing on Palestine, in which the country and its inhabitants were viewed through Eurocentric lenses which would surely have made them unrecognisable for most Palestinians at the time.

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[31] Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections and Contemporary Travel Writing* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), p. 8
[32] Barbara Korte, *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations* (Macmillan, 2000), p. 11; Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 12
[33] Michael Kowaleski, "Introduction: The Modern Literature of Travel" in Michael Kowaleski (ed.), *Temperamental Journeys: Essays on the Modern Literature of Travel* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), p. 9
[34] James Duncan and Derek Gregory, "Introduction" in James Duncan and Derek Gregory (eds.), *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 5

As Duncan and Gregory note, for many years historic European travel accounts produced between the Renaissance and the twentieth century were viewed, according to those accounts' own presentation, as a 'record of heroism and triumphant discovery in which other cultures and other natures were shown to have surrendered their secrets before the powerful gaze of Western "Reason"'.[35] This view has now been demolished, a product of postcolonial perspectives and the (at least partial) decentring of Europe in academic analysis, which have revealed, in Youngs' words, 'the connections between travel, empire, capitalism and racial ideologies'.[36] Travel writing has been deeply complicit in colonialism, proceeding or concurrent with colonisation in "heroic" narratives of "discovery", or following colonisation as a method of legitimation and justification of colonial rule. Colonial considerations may be manifested in every line of historic Western travel writing on certain regions; Debbie Lisle argues that 'colonial relations are constitutive of both the historical development of the genre [of travel literature] and its general poetics'.[37] Travel literature operates differently regarding different colonial powers and colonised contexts. As Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés indicate in their introduction to *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, which includes an enlightening perspective on the significance of Palestine to travel writing's development, 'there is no one single history of European imperialism in travel writing, but rather a succession of nationally tinged paradigms, with some interesting differences of emphasis, within a common European tradition'.[38]

An important contribution to the study of travel writing and colonialism is made by Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, in which she argues that 'travel and exploration writing *produced* "the rest of the world" for European readerships', in ways that 'encode and legitimate the aspirations of economic expansion and empire'. Pratt develops three concepts I draw upon: the 'contact zone', 'planetary consciousness' and 'autoethnography'. In analysing traveller-writers' representations of the Palestinian people, Pratt's notion of the contact zone is useful, as 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple

[35] Duncan and Gregory, "Introduction", p. 2
[36] Youngs, *Cambridge Introduction to Travel Literature*, p. 9
[37] Debbie Lisle, *The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 58
[38] Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Introduction: Travel and the Problem of Modernity" in Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books 1999), 1-56, pp. 47-48

with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination'. Late Ottoman Palestine was in some ways a unique a space; within the Ottoman Empire (a political ally of Britain), it was not available for immediate colonisation, and its eventual colonisation would not be as a permanent imperial dominion, but a gateway for Palestine's possession by the Zionist movement. Indigenous people were viewed as both familiar Biblical relics, and alien, needing to be firmly governed or driven out. Yet like other non-Western peoples, their representation in the travelogues was strongly marked by the writers' sense of European superiority and an assumed social hierarchy.

Pratt's second concept, planetary consciousness, refers to the eighteenth century 'emergenc[e] of natural history as a structure of knowledge, and the momentum toward interior, as opposed to maritime, exploration'. This was both a product of post-Enlightenment scientific development and Europe's growing colonial ambitions, reflected in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European travel texts. A fundamentally Eurocentric project, implied by the quest for knowledge was the overwriting of indigenous knowledge(s) and the redefinition of a place whilst actual European colonial annexation of that place was being prepared. Regarding Palestine, while many travel narratives contained elements of ethnographic and natural "discovery", the particular variety of planetary consciousness was Biblical archaeology and the redefinition of Palestine as a land of the Judeo-Christian past rather than of the present with an existing mainly Islamic indigenous society. A final concept elucidated by Pratt I draw upon, if briefly, is autoethnography, the 'instances in which colonised subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the coloniser's own terms'; this is relevant to the story of Ya'qub al-Shalabi, discussed in Chapter Seven.[39]

The most influential theoretical contribution on travel writing for this thesis has been the classic 1978 study *Orientalism* by Edward Said (1935-2003). This work reignited scholarly interest in travel writing, and has to some degree influenced all the recent, critical analyses of travel literature in the light of colonialism and Western dominance of non-Western parts of the globe.[40] As the Iraqi-Israeli cultural theorist Ella Shohat has noted, Said's critique was informed by political decolonisation and "Third-World" revolutionary theories which 'cumulatively undermined confidence in

[39] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Routledge, 1992), pp. 4-15
[40] See Youngs, *Cambridge Introduction to Travel Literature*, p. 8

European modernity and its master narrative of Progress'; Said's contribution of 'adversarial scholarship' aimed at initiating a 'decolonisation of the academy'.[41] While not focused upon the specificities of the West's view towards Palestine, *Orientalism* carries a powerful resonance for any work considering the modern history of Palestine and Western involvement there. This is partly because Said reviews attitudes towards the wider Arab world of which Palestine and Palestinians are part, and partly because of Said's own positionality: a Palestinian and a child at the time of the *Nakba*, his life was lived in an exile deriving from colonialism and settler colonialism.[42]

Said's work subjects to a withering critique the discourse on "the Orient", particularly the Eastern Mediterranean, produced in the West from the eighteenth to the twentieth century (and, by extension, until today). The essence of Said's conception is Orientalism as a form of knowledge inseparably linked to power, 'a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient', inscribed with 'the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures'. Said dates the development of modern Orientalism in Britain and France – 'the pioneer nations in the Orient and in Oriental studies', holding 'these vanguard positions […] by virtue of the two greatest colonial networks in pre-twentieth-century history' – to the impetus given to Western interest in the Islamic world by Napoleon's attempted invasion of Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the eighteenth century. Napoleon's reliance upon the "experts" on the region he enlisted to accompany his campaign, and upon existing travel accounts such as the 1787 *Voyage en Égypte et en Syrie* by the Comte de Volney (1757-1820), opened an era of Orientalist discourse's subservience to imperial projects. As Said writes,

> [Napoleon's] plans for Egypt therefore became the first in a long series of European encounters with the Orient in which the Orientalist's special expertise was put directly to functional colonial use; for at the crucial instant when an Orientalist had to decide whether his loyalties and sympathies lay with the Orient or with the conquering West, he always chose the latter, from Napoleon's time on.

[41] Ella Shohat, "On the Margins of Middle Eastern Studies: Situating Said's *Orientalism*" in Ella Shohat, *On the Arab-Jew, Palestine, and Other Displacements: Selected Writings of Ella Shohat* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 321-328, p. 322

[42] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, p. vii; also see Edward Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (New York: Knopf, 1999)

Orientalism's relationship with power is not subtle, but lies upon 'the text's surface'; Said emphasises that 'Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West'. The world seen through the lens of Orientalism (which, as Said notes, 'has less to do with the Orient than it does with "our" world') is Manichaean, where East and West are assigned diametrically opposed characteristics, and 'there are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power'. Said indicates Orientalism's use to justify new colonial ventures, arguing that 'to say simply that Orientalism was a rationalisation of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact'.

Another key part of Said's argument is the restrictive nature of Orientalism, 'better grasped as a set of constraints upon and limitations of thought than it is simply as a positive doctrine', ensuring that 'the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action'. Imposing a limited vocabulary available for representing the Orient's regions resulted in the similarities between the Palestine travelogues, seemingly endless (very slight) variations on depictions of the antiquity of the Holy Land, and their repetitive intertextuality. Said attributed significance to travel texts, particularly on the Eastern Mediterranean: identifying an 'official intellectual genealogy of Orientalism' of "scholarly" works on language and religions, Said also warned against

> neglect [of] the great contribution of imaginative and travel literature, which strengthened the divisions established by Orientalists between the various geographical, temporal, and racial departments of the Orient. Such neglect would be incorrect, since for the Islamic Orient this literature is especially rich and makes a significant contribution to building the Orientalist discourse.[43]

A politicised analysis of such cultural works touches upon, in Shohat's words, 'the inextricable nexus between the supposedly hard power of institutions and the supposedly soft power of culture'.[44]

[43] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 3, 7, 17, 80, 20-21, 12, 36, 39, 42, 99
[44] Shohat, "On the Margins of Middle Eastern Studies", p. 326

Said's conceptualisation of Orientalism has been indispensable to this thesis. Yet his analysis has also received criticism, including in some of the critical works on travel to Palestine reviewed above. Melman has argued that Said's approach is "gender-blind", dismissive of the potential difference between male and female travellers' perceptions.[45] Bar-Yosef comments that 'Britain's imperial ambitions towards Palestine have received scant attention' in the 'the scholarly field which has emanated from Said's ground-breaking work'. He extends this to Said's own work, claiming that 'the Holy Land is rather marginalized in *Orientalism*; and although he dwells extensively on the nature of Zionist colonialism […] Said very rarely stops to think about the distinct nature of Western interests in the Holy Land, which might distinguish it from other Orientalist encounters'. Bar-Yosef even makes the claim that 'throughout the nineteenth century, English stakes in the Holy Land were shaped by traditions and articulated in ways which cannot be accommodated by Said's model of Orientalism'.[46] Said began to broach the question, writing in *The Question of Palestine* that

> What were to become institutional Zionist attitudes to the Arab Palestinian natives and their supposed claims to a "normal" existence, were more than prepared for in the attitudes and the practices of British scholars, administrators, and experts who were officially involved in the exploitation and government of Palestine since the mid-nineteenth century.[47]

Deconstructing the specifics of this process is left to Said's successors. Provided in *Orientalism* is a methodological approach to considering the West's relationship with the Arab world. Many scholars have taken the framework Said first elucidated and expanded it into new areas. For instance, challenging the accusation of Said's "gender-blindness", in her *Europe's Myths of Orient* Rana Kabbani has explored Orientalism's representation of women, writing that 'the articulation of sexism […] went hand in hand with the articulation of racism, for women were a sub-group in patriarchal Victorian society just as other races were sub-groups within the colonial enterprise. Oriental women were thus doubly demeaned (as women, and as 'Orientals') whilst being curiously sublimated'.[48]

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[45] Melman, *Women's Orients*, p. 7
[46] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, pp. 5-6, 7
[47] Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), p. 79
[48] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule* (London: Pandora Press, 1988), p. 7

Critical commentary has also explored the key role Palestine has occupied in the history of travel and travel writing. Since the first centuries of Christianity, Palestine has attracted Christian pilgrimage from the West and been the subject of travel accounts. From an early stage, trends such as 'the redefinition of a series of existing landscapes as sacred in a specifically Christian way', and the use of the Bible as a 'guidebook', were already prominent, as Elsner and Rubiés point out. In the earliest surviving Christian Palestine pilgrimage text, the account of a traveller known as the Bordeaux Pilgrim produced around 333, Palestine was 'only meaningful in relation to scripture, and its landmarks acquire their significance by being interpreted in the light of the Biblical text which is the pilgrim's principal resource'.[49] As this thesis shows, these attitudes were still dominant in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travel literature.

It is important to note that many travel narratives to Palestine fall outside European and Christian traditions. In their introduction to *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517-1713*, Judy Hayden and Nabil Matar point out that Palestine has long been the destination of Muslim, Jewish and non-Western Christian pilgrimage and travel accounts. Hayden and Matar point out that

> Travelers wielding the Bible with its extensive geographical details about 'Canaan' and 'Judea' wrote about the land in a manner quite different from those wielding the Qur'ān with its near-total absence of geographical allusion. The […] contrasts […] underline the importance of studying the travel narratives and pilgrimage accounts together; but while the accounts were written about the same space and within the same time, they did not produce the same gaze.[50]

The decentring of Western Christian accounts in favour of alternative and perhaps subaltern sources, is an important project, part of the historiographical rebalancing articulated by Doumani and others. While this thesis replicates a Eurocentric focus through its choice of subject matter – as Pratt notes, 'if one studies only what the Europeans saw and said, one reproduces the monopoly on knowledge and interpretation that the imperial enterprise sought' – I seek to hint at the biases and elisions in Western representations which may not have been present in non-Western

[49] Elsner and Rubiés, "Introduction", p. 16
[50] Judy Hayden and Nabil Matar, "Introduction: Pilgrims and Travelers – In Search of the 'Holy' in Holy Land" in Judy Hayden and Nabil Matar (eds.), *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517-1713* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1-26, p. 16

accounts, and the reasons for their existence.[51] This is illustrated for an earlier period in Matar's paper "Two Journeys to Seventeenth-Century Palestine", which contrasts the account of a Muslim Moroccan traveller, Salim Abdallah al-Ayyashi, with that of an English Protestant only known as 'T.B'. Matar finds that the English traveller's purpose was 'not to satisfy his curiosity but to confirm the sacred text', and that T.B. 'moved from site to site, imposing a silence on the continuum between them that had enjoyed no temporal sequence and no meaningful coherence. There were no people in T.B.'s Palestine, no nature, no terrain to link them. He saw what the text [the Bible] told him to see'. Matar concludes that 'Ayyashi experienced one Palestine; T.B. constructed another'; this accusation is applicable to many British travellers in late Ottoman Palestine.[52]

[51] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, p. 7
[52] Nabil Matar, "Two Journeys to Seventeenth-Century Palestine", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 4, (Autumn 2000), 37-50, p. 49

## III: 'A Home in Palestine': Zionism, Proto-Zionism and Settler Colonialism

While research on specific aspects of Zionist settler colonialism are referenced throughout the thesis, this section presents a select number of works influencing my historical and theoretical understanding of Zionism. Few contemporary political phenomena can have been as hotly contested as Zionism, a nationalist political movement with its origins in the late nineteenth century, which according to the Basle Programme adopted at the First Zionist Congress in 1897 sought 'to establish for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law'. The Programme continued that this was to be done through 'the promotion […] of the colonization of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers'.[53] While supporters of Zionism have claimed Zionism is part of Jewish tradition, that Zionist ideas 'go back to the remotest past' and that 'modern Zionism is the logical consequence of Jewish History', others have argued that 'political Zionism emerged […] as a radical break from 2,000 years of rabbinical Judaism and Jewish tradition'.[54] While not primarily concerned with theological arguments for or against Zionism, this thesis investigates the formation of Zionist ideas in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not as divinely-ordained commandments from the mists of time.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 on 78 per cent of the area of British Mandate Palestine, accompanied by the dispossession and exile of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the *Nakba*, Zionism as an ideology has come to mean support for Israel and its actions, whilst as a practice it has had a profound impact upon Israeli politics and Palestinians' everyday lives. Israel has spent much time and effort since 1948 disseminating what Michael Prior, a Bible scholar and critic of settler-colonial movements, identified as two versions of 'the canonical Zionist narrative'. The earlier 'canonical secular Zionist narrative' developed by the movement's elite leadership in early twentieth century and Mandate years claims 'the Zionists intended no ill to the Arabs of Palestine', that 'Zionism was purely a Jewish liberation movement, and not at all a colonial one', and 'the Zionists acted independently of interested imperial powers'. Since the Six-Day War of 1967, in which Israel military occupied the Palestinian territories of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and other

[53] Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), Volume 1, p. xxiv
[54] Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, p. xiii; Nur Masalha, *The Bible and Zionism: Invented Traditions, Archaeology and Post-Colonialism in Palestine-Israel* (London: Zed Books, 2007), p. 1

Arab territories, Israeli governments particularly of the right, and the settler movement, have articulated the 'canonical religious Zionist narrative'. This asserts that 'Zionism is, fundamentally, a religious enterprise', that 'the Zionist programme […] derives its legitimacy from the biblical covenant', and that '"biblical archaeology" confirms' the continuity between ancient Israelites and modern Jews.[55] As this thesis shows, much of this narrative found early expression from British travellers.

As Said argues, while 'Zionism has had a large number of successes', and many 'regard Zionism and Israel as urgently important facts for Jewish life' as a result of European anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, for an accurate appraisal it is necessary to consider 'Zionism from the standpoint of its victims', namely the Palestinian people whose experience of Zionism has been likened to apartheid.[56] While in the Basle Programme the Zionist movement was happy to state that the establishment of a 'home in Palestine' for the Jews was to proceed firstly through 'colonization', currently the assertion that the settler-colonial framework can be applied to Palestine/Israel often leads to, for Israeli and Jewish scholars, claims of 'treason and self-hatred', and for others to increasingly virulent accusations of anti-Semitism.[57] For the present thesis, which covers the period of Zionism's emergence – firstly as a practice of early settlers from the 1880s onwards, then as a more concrete political ideology in the late 1890s – and explores the influence which non-Jewish, primarily Evangelical British travellers had on Zionism's infancy, it is crucial to establish a historical and theoretical understanding of early Zionism.

A voluminous amount of material has been written on the genesis of Zionism (or proto-Zionism, as early Zionism is sometimes called), much of it focusing on the contribution of non-Jews, especially European Protestants, to articulating certain tenets of Zionist ideology, particularly the Biblically-mandated "restoration" of the Jews to Palestine. This has given the impression of a long, unproblematic history of proto-

[55] Michael Prior, "Zionism and the Challenge of Historical Truth and Morality" in Michael Prior (ed.), *Speaking the Truth About Zionism and Israel* (London: Melisende, 2004), 13-50, pp. 15-17

[56] Said, *Question of Palestine*, p. 72. For a summary of the arguments for Israel as an apartheid state and a comparison between Israel and Apartheid-era South Africa, see Lorenzo Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society* (London: Pluto Press, 2006), pp. 16-40

[57] Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach" in Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London: Routledge, 1999), 72-85, p. 72 (editor's comment). For a commentary on the weaponization of anti-Semitism claims in recent years, see the articles by Haim Bresheeth, Lawrence Davidson, and Paul Kelemen in *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (November 2018). See also Sam Levin, "Suspension of controversial Palestine class at UC Berkeley sparks debate", *The Guardian* (16 September 2016), https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/15/uc-berkeley-israel-palestine-class-suspended-decal (accessed 04/02/20); Francesco Amoruso, Ilan Pappe and Sophie Richter-Devoe, "Introduction: Knowledge, Power, and the 'Settler Colonial Turn' in Palestine Studies", *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4, *Special Issue on Settler Colonialism in Palestine* (2019), 451-463

Zionist thought in Europe, and widescale acceptance of the "return" of the Jews to Palestine, especially from Protestantism. The resulting product is the epic sweep of works such as Barbara Tuchman's *Bible and Sword: How the British Came to Palestine*, in which the author celebrates Britain's role in leading 'to an event unique in history, the recreation of a state after a lapse of sovereignty more than two thousand years long'.[58] Matar has critiqued this view in his article "Protestantism, Palestine, and Partisan Scholarship", claiming that such authors, 'bent on supporting Zionist claims to Palestine', have 'attempted to make history subservient to their personal politics'.[59] Yet Matar may go too far in attempting to discredit this school of thought; as this thesis demonstrates, non-Jewish British Protestants played a highly significant role in developing and disseminating Zionist ideas. Use of the settler-colonial framework, as described below, may be helpful for considering the influence of Protestant thought upon later Zionist practices, without implying support for those practices.

Bar-Yosef provides a similar argument in his chapter "Eccentric Zion: Victorian Culture and the Jewish Restoration to Palestine". Drawing on evidence of negative reactions towards public declarations of support for the Jewish "restoration" to Palestine and the conversion of the Jews, Bar-Yosef concludes that while 'Zionist historiography […] seems correct in its assertion that Christian Zionist ideas were in constant circulation throughout the nineteenth century, and that many of those who circulated these ideas belonged to the social élite', this is counterbalanced with the assertion that 'despite the fact that these views enjoyed such wide visibility, Christian Zionism did not exist – at least until the 1880s – within the cultural, religious, or political mainstream'.[60] Nevertheless, as this thesis seeks to show, the idea of the eventual Jewish colonisation of Palestine was commonly casually assumed or articulated in various degrees of detail in years and decades before the 1880s, not always explicitly linked to Christian doctrine.

Pro-Zionist works overtly propagating the Zionist narrative are also valuable documents in themselves. Particularly noteworthy is the 1919 *History of Zionism: 1600-1918* by Nahum Sokolow (1859-1936). Sokolow, a leading Zionist of Polish origin, held such positions as Secretary-General of the Zionist Organisation from 1907

[58] Barbara Tuchman, *Bible and Sword: How the British Came to Palestine* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1982), p. vii
[59] Nabil Matar, "Protestantism, Palestine, and Partisan Scholarship", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Summer, 1989), 52-70, pp. 52, 53
[60] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, pp. 183-184

to 1909, head of the Zionist delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, and President of the World Zionist Organisation from 1931 to 1935.[61] Sokolow's *History* is a useful articulation of how Zionist elites viewed their movement around the turning point of the end of Ottoman control of Palestine and the start of the British occupation. Deeply involved in drafting the Balfour Declaration – Arthur Balfour (1848-1930) contributed a preface to the *History* – Sokolow was an anglophile, and focused much of his work on the development of Zionism in Western Europe.[62] Sokolow wrote sycophantically of Palestine's then-new British occupiers and, as per Matar's accusations, attempted to prove Zionism's lengthy antecedence in Britain. For instance, claiming an age-old English affinity with the ancient Israelites as a contributing factor for non-Jewish British Zionism, Sokolow wrote

> No people has been so devotedly attached to the Bible as the English, and the effect may be traced in all the great movements of English history. The Bible has dominated the whole domestic and political life of the English people for some centuries, and has provided the basis of the English conception of personal and political liberty.[63]

Sokolow realised the influence which nineteenth-century British travellers, including several discussed in this thesis (fig. 2.1), had on the formation of modern Zionism. His *History* is a useful indicator of the debt the Zionist movement recognised it owed to British travellers, referenced below to demonstrate the directness of the influence some travellers had on later Zionist thought and practice.

[61] Anonymous, "Nahum Sokolow (1859-1936)", *Jewish Virtual Library*, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/nahum-sokolow (accessed 04/02/20)
[62] Also contributing their two cents apiece at the beginning of *History of Zionism* were Mark Sykes (1879-1919), a key British supporter of Zionism, and James Bryce (1838-1922), a Liberal politician and ambassador to the United States; Stéphen Pichon (1857-1933), several times the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, contributed the introduction to the second volume. Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, pp. xxix-xxxviii; vol. 2, vii-x
[63] Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, p. 2


**Figure 2.1:**
**Portraits of British and American non-Jewish Zionists discussed by Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, Volume 1, facing pages 62 (left) and 208**

Another useful, much more critical, text is Regina Sharif's *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History*. Like Sokolow, Sharif begins her exploration in Reformation Europe, particularly Protestant Britain swept by Puritanism and the 'Hebraic revival' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the Evangelical movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, until proto-Zionism pervaded many aspects of Victorian culture and politics. Yet in her exploration of how non-Jewish Zionism 'grew from a theological doctrine into a political ideology of the contemporary West', Sharif explores Zionism's connections with anti-Arab racism, anti-Semitism, colonialism and empire, casting nineteenth-century British support for Zionism in the light of the imperial politics of the Eastern Question rather than mystical affinity. Of British individuals who devised colonial plans for Palestine, Sharif writes 'they were much

more than mere forerunners of a future movement. They were already true Zionists in the same sense as [Jewish Zionist leaders Chaim] Weizmann or [Theodor] Herzl or [Max] Nordau'. She concludes her book with the recognition that 'as a result of non-Jewish Zionism a whole complex of prejudices against the Arabs, their culture and their religion, have been systematically inculcated into our own consciousness and have thus directly or indirectly influenced our views on Palestine, the Palestine problem and the Palestinian people', a starting point for considering how older discourses continue to influence attitudes in the West.[64]

Proto-Zionism or non-Jewish Zionism has often been examined in the guise of Christian Zionism, religious doctrines particularly associated with Protestant and Evangelical Churches supporting the Jewish "restoration" to Palestine. Nur Masalha's *The Bible and Zionism* views Christian and Jewish Zionism not as separate but as deeply intertwined phenomena. The second chapter, "Biblical Prophecy and Christian Imperialism", reviews the development of Christian Zionism from its origins until the contemporary Evangelical pro-Israel lobby in the United States, including the period addressed in this thesis when Britain was the heartland of Christian Zionist theology. Masalha notes the declining place of considerations of the conversion of Jews to Christianity in Christian Zionist thought in the nineteenth century, and the role played by Biblical archaeology in attempting to prove as verbatim the Bible narrative in Palestine. Supporting the attempt to demonstrate the influence of earlier traveller-writers on later British policies, Masalha notes that 'although the Balfour Declaration was partly motivated by Great War calculations, it was not issued in an ideological vacuum. Its content reflected the Christian Zionist prophetic politics which became deeply rooted in nineteenth century nationalist Protestant Britain'. Masalha provides a primer on Christian Zionist doctrine, particularly the Dispensationalism associated with the Anglo-Irish theologian John Nelson Darby (1801-1892). Today, this millenarian eschatology may have over 60 million adherents in the United States, some of whom are active supporters of the Israeli settler movement, which seeks the demolition of the Islamic structures on Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif and their replacement by a third Jewish temple, possibly prefigured in the earlier British travelogues as discussed in Chapter Four.[65]

[64] Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 22, 63, 139
[65] Masalha, *Bible and Zionism*, pp. 98, 123

Yet while the kind of apocalyptic future articulated by such fringe (though today widespread) Protestant sects might have been believed-in or hoped-for by the travellers discussed in this thesis, questions of millenarian theology remained fairly marginal to their texts. Rather, it may be useful to apply what Peter Miano calls 'mainstream Christian Zionism' to the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century context of the British travellers.[66] None of the traveller-writers discussed claimed explicit allegiance to Darby's Dispensationalism; rather, an integral part of the "mainstream" Evangelical Anglicanism or Nonconformism of most travellers was the belief that Palestine was promised by God to the Jewish people, and they were destined to "return" to Palestine. As Masalha points out, this attitude also influenced Westerners' views of indigenous Palestinians (and native peoples in different colonial contexts) as akin to the Biblical Philistines, signifying 'the archetypal Other'.[67] This is another lamentable continuity between views of Palestine from centuries past, and contemporary Christian and religious Jewish Zionism.

The relationship between indigenous and settler populations is at the heart of theories of settler colonialism, which form the last part of this literature review. Studies of Proto-Zionism and nineteenth-century Christian Zionism, while their authors may view Zionism as a settler-colonial phenomenon, have relatively rarely sought to determine influences and parallels between earlier non-Jewish Zionist ideologies and later settler-colonial practices in Palestine. The settler-colonial paradigm provides this thesis with a fresh perspective upon a body of texts which, as indicated above, have otherwise been well-studied. Settler colonial theory has been dedicated to the analysis of settler societies, particularly in Africa, North America and Australasia, where settlers of European origin since initial acts of "discovery" or conquest have attempted to create societies in which settler power and indigenous dispossession have been engrained. This form of colonisation differs significantly from metropolitan colonialism, in which indigenous labour is exploited and the colony ruled from an imperial metropole; settler colonialism is characterised by attempts to erase indigenous presence, the "permanent" implantation of European settlers, and their unrelenting drive for land acquisition.[68]

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[66] Peter Miano, "*Mainstream* Christian Zionism" in Prior (ed.), *Speaking the Truth About Zionism and Israel*, 126-147

[67] Masalha, *Bible and Zionism*, p. 99

[68] See for instance Gabriel Piterberg, "The Zionist Colonization of Palestine in the Context of Comparative Settler-Colonialism" in Rochelle Davis and Mimi Kirk, *Palestine and the Palestinians in the 21st Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 15-31, p. 15

The outstanding theorist and historian of settler colonialism, Patrick Wolfe, defined the theoretical approach in two arguments in his essay "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native". The first is that settler colonialism is based on the 'logic of the elimination of the native' in the territory the settlers covet. The second is that 'invasion is a structure not an event': not a one-off act or even chronologically-limited occupation, but a system developed for an indefinite time period as the settlers make their home in the indigenous people's territory, and – to paraphrase Wolfe's quotation of Zionism's chief ideologue Herzl (1860-1904) – 'demolish before they construct'.[69] The practical result is that settler-colonial regimes have developed a range of methods to ensure natives' disappearance from the land, from genocide to assimilation and much in-between. Zionism has its own array of methods, most notably the expulsion of most Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied region in 1948, a strategy developed over decades of internal conversations in the Zionist movement as shown in Masalha's *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of 'Transfer' in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948*.[70] Since then, Palestinians in historic Palestine (and by extension their compatriots in refugee camps in the surrounding countries) have faced further Israeli strategies aiming at elimination, characterised as an 'ongoing *Nakba*'.[71] While thesis is mainly concerned with non-Jewish Zionism in a "pre-settler-colonial" phase of ideological formation (the first half of the thesis's timescale precedes the commonly-accepted start of Zionist settlement, while in the second half Zionist Jewish immigration remained far lower and more restricted than it would be in the Mandate era, reaching around 30,000 immigrants between 1880 and 1914), it nevertheless seeks to reveal travellers' influence on later practices of elimination against Palestinians.[72]

As alluded to above, supporters of Zionism have attempted to resist the application of settler-colonial analysis to academic discussions of the State of Israel, implying as this does (amongst other implications) that valid comparisons can be made to other settler contexts strongly marked by repression of indigenous populations. Lorenzo Veracini in his *Israel and Settler Society* notes that opponents of settler-

[69] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native", *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006), 387-409, pp. 387, 388
[70] Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of 'Transfer' in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948* (Berkeley: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992)
[71] See Hanan Ashrawi, "Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerances", *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Spring 2002), 94-104, p. 98
[72] Arthur Ruppin, "Twenty-Five Years of Palestine: A Résumé of Jewish Effort and Achievement" in Meyer W. Weisgal (ed.), *Theodor Herzl: A Memorial* (New York: The New Palestine, 1929), 195-210, p. 209

colonial theory claim that 'the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is intractably unique and largely defies comparative approaches', and that the situation 'bears little resemblance with typically colonial conflicts'.[73] Yet these arguments have been challenged over the past half-century. As Francesco Amoruso, Ilan Pappé and Sophie Richter-Devoe point out in their introduction to a recent issue of *Interventions* dedicated to Israeli settler colonialism and Palestinian resistance to it, among the first to recognise Israel as a settler colony were Palestinian writers (drawing upon Palestinians' everyday experience of Israel's tactics of elimination since 1948). Particularly since 1967 and the streaming of Israeli settlers into occupied territory (especially East Jerusalem and the West Bank) gave impetus to considerations of Israel as a colonising force, analysis of Israel through a settler-colonial framework is widespread.[74]

Much of the recent scholarship viewing Israel as a settler-colonial entity has, understandably, focused upon Israeli colonisation practices since 1948 and at the present time. This research offers little practically to a historical investigation of Zionist ideas in not only the pre-Israeli state period, but the pre-Mandate, late Ottoman period. Among scholars who have cast a critical eye over Zionism's formative years, challenging Zionism's myths about itself, Israeli academics have produced ground-breaking research.[75] Gershon Shafir has uncovered some of the formative influences on early Zionist attitudes. In his work, including the article "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach", Shafir argues that Zionism's practices in Palestine have been profoundly shaped by the struggle between settlers and Palestinians. Referring to the "socialist" ideology of early twentieth-century settlers, Shafir insists that 'socialist ideals and other imported blueprints played a lesser role in creating the Israeli state than the circumstances in which the Jewish immigrants found themselves in Palestine'.[76] While Shafir's contribution is significant in refuting the teleological and linear and heroic narratives of Zionism of the type discussed above, a multitude of Zionist attitudes and practices were prefigured by non-Jewish British travellers who did not engage in sustained competition with local Palestinians, but observed the land and indigenous population with an eye to colonisation and prejudices informed by other colonial contexts.

[73] Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society*, p. 1
[74] Amoruso, Pappé and Richter-Devoe, "Introduction", p. 454
[75] See Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology: Internal and External Comparisons", *Journal of Historical Sociology* Vol. 6, No. 3 (September 1993), 327-350
[76] Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism", p. 73

While none of the traveller-writers discussed in this work can be considered simply as fully-fledged members of the settler-colonial Zionist movement – all were non-Jews or Christian converts and thus unable to fully participate in the movement, regardless of how much they supported it – the paradigm of settler-colonial studies has great relevance for their work. As this thesis shows, throughout the period travellers' Christian Zionist assumptions developed into support for colonisation and plans for how further colonisation could proceed. Perspectives on settler colonialism particularly inform Chapters Six on travellers' representation of the Jews in Palestine and Eleven on travellers' colonial plans, though they are relevant throughout, casting new light upon considerations of Palestine's indigenous people and the capabilities of its land. Settler-colonial concerns intertwined inseparably with the politics of the Peaceful Crusade and the modes of representation in Western travel writing and Orientalist discourse, to inform a genre of texts which, placed alongside subsequent developments and ideologies, reveal the influence they have had on the settler-colonial reality present in Palestine/Israel today.

## CHAPTER THREE

## 'A Careful and Minute Inspection': Methodology[1]

**Figure 3.1:**
**Etching which became Palestine Exploration Fund logo,**
***Tent Work in Palestine* by Claude Reignier Conder,**
**frontispiece**

This chapter presents an overview of this thesis's methodology, from the principles guiding the selection of the source material to the techniques I have drawn upon in analysing them.

[1] The quotation in this chapter title is taken from Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), p. xv

While some studies of late Ottoman Palestine have adopted a timeframe of 'the fabled "long nineteenth century"' from Napoleon's attempted invasion until the British occupation of 1917 – a definition identified by Beshara Doumani as a contributing factor to historiographical Eurocentrism – this thesis adopts a shorter period, from the resumption of Ottoman control in 1840 after the Egyptian occupation, to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.[2] As Alexander Scholch notes, the first four decades of this period were the height of the "Peaceful Crusade", from the establishment of the British Consulate in Jerusalem in 1838 and the creation of the Anglo-Prussian Episcopal See in 1841, until the early 1880s marked by both a change in Britain's "pro-Ottoman" policy and the beginning of Zionist settler colonialism in Palestine; travel to the region became easier, safer and more institutionalised over this time.[3] Western travel continued until the outbreak of hostilities between the Central Powers and the Ottoman Empire and Britain and its allies. The period from 1840 to 1914 thus affords a useful, more compact period for considering the formation of travellers' discourse than a "long nineteenth century.

Around forty travelogues were read in-depth to provide evidence for this thesis's hypotheses, with other travel accounts consulted on minor points. The travelogues were selected to include almost the full range of the time period, with every decade represented, allowing a perspective on changes and continuities over the seven-and-a-half decades. The thesis does not aim to present the "most significant" travelogues in terms of their popularity at the time; whilst some of the most popular works, such as Kinglake's *Eothen*, are discussed, other noteworthy travelogues which have been analysed in other studies have not been included here, and some seemingly obscure works about whose authors little is known are included, such as Russell's *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*. Moreover, a range of other primary sources were drawn upon which, if they cannot be classified as "standard" travelogues, are nevertheless clearly connected to the topic of British travel in late Ottoman Palestine. Examples include guidebooks and memoirs of extended stays in particular locations rather than more "mobile" travel narratives, as well as journal and newspaper articles and pamphlets,

[2] Beshara Doumani, "Introduction" in Angelos Dalachanis and Vincent Lemire (eds.), *Ordinary Jerusalem, 1840-1940: Opening New Archives, Revisiting a Global City* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 139-142, p. 139. For (very different) works adhering to the "long nineteenth century" concept, see Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979); Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005)
[3] Alexander Scholch, "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn 1992), 39-56

often authored by individuals who had travelled to Palestine and also wrote travelogues.[4] Nevertheless, at the heart of this thesis lie the books recounting peripatetic British visitors' journeys around Palestine. Illustrations, mostly taken from the travelogues, have been included where I believe they supplement my analysis of the texts.

Reflecting the fact that most travellers (particularly early in the period), and in turn most of those who wrote accounts of their travels, were men – one male traveller wrote that 'any healthy lady up to fifty […] may accompany her spouse, provided she be sedate and willing to take things quietly' – most of the traveller-writers discussed below are male, the most significant female travellers included being Isabel Burton, Elizabeth Rundle Charles, Ada Goodrich-Freer, Mary Eliza Rogers and Agnes Smith.[5] While women travellers made important contributions to the travelogue genre and sometimes wrote from a slightly different perspective to their male counterparts, I decided against a particular investigation of women travellers' texts, partly because this has already been done by Melman, Stockdale and others, and partly because I have been more concerned with the implications of the texts' representations for the indigenous Palestinians, including Palestinian women. I believe that despite the vast size of the Palestine travelogue genre, the size and selection of my sample are sufficient for me to identify the genre-spanning features of the whole body of travel literature on Palestine. Following Said in *Orientalism*, I 'employ close textual readings whose goal is to reveal the dialectic between individual text or writer and the complex collective formation to which his [or her] work is a contribution'.[6]

Text selection required further considerations which were not as simple as they might initially seem. My selection of British travellers was partly to refine the immense amount of travel literature produced in the Western world. In some respects, nationality is an arbitrary distinction between travellers who otherwise may have held similar ideas; many American travellers to Palestine of Anglo-Saxon origin shared the Evangelical Protestantism of their British counterparts played an integral role in shaping English-language discourse on Palestine, and, through the transatlantic circulation of their works, may have influenced social attitudes towards Palestine in

[4] The most significant book-length texts I have drawn upon are indicated in the bibliography at the end of this thesis.
[5] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 301
[6] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 23-24

Britain as well as the United States.[7] Yet given Britain's political involvement in Palestine from 1917 until 1948, the choice of focus upon British travellers seems logical from the standpoint of investigating travellers' role in forming social attitudes in the British upper-middle and upper classes prior to Britain's intervention which changed the course of Palestine's history. British travellers do not form a nationally heterogeneous category, with this thesis including Scottish, Welsh and Irish (the entirety of Ireland was colonised as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland throughout the period of this thesis) travellers, as well as the English who have previously been the most discussed in relation to Evangelical Protestantism's interest in Palestine.[8] An "all-British" approach may be more instructive than previous approaches which have posited a "special relationship" between English Protestants and the Jews, despite the fact that other Britons shared very similar views.

What geographically constitutes Palestine itself in the travelogues is also not necessarily straightforward. Within the Ottoman Empire, political borders in the Eastern Mediterranean which have become familiar in the post-Sykes-Picot and post-independence (for all the region's people bar Palestinians) era did not exist. For travellers, the idea of Palestine was roughly concomitant with "the Holy Land", defined in the Bible as, north to south, a region 'from Dan to Beersheba' (first stated in Judges 20:1). In addition to most of the later British Mandate Palestine, this could include parts of modern Egypt (the Sinai Peninsula), southern Lebanon, south-western Syria (particularly the Jawlan or Golan Heights), and western Jordan, known to travellers, as discussed in Chapter Nine, as "Eastern Palestine". All these regions were visited by travellers on journeys to Palestine, and represented in travelogues. Frequently, travellers referred to areas in Palestine as part of "Syria" or even "Turkey", and to Palestine's indigenous inhabitants as "Syrians"; their statements on the land and people often did not distinguish between the area later concretely defined as Palestine, and other Eastern Mediterranean regions. I have focused upon travellers' views largely on the later British Mandate area west of the Jordan River and indicated where

[7] For American travel to Palestine during the nineteenth century, see Fuad Sha'ban, *For Zion's Sake: The Judeo-Christian Tradition in American Culture* (London and New York: Pluto Press, 2005), pp. 119-148. For more recent and contemporary social attitudes, see Amy Kaplan, *Our American Israel: The Story of an Entangled Alliance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 2018)

[8] For works largely focusing on a specifically English relationship with Palestine, see Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), 2 Volumes.; Barbara Tuchman, *Bible and Sword: How the British Came to Palestine* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1982); and Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005). For a work with a different national focus, see Jasmine Donahaye, *Whose People? Wales, Israel, Palestine* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012)

traveller-writers were referring to other locations, though have not attempted to rigidly demarcate travellers' views when I believe they also apply to travellers' ideas on Palestine.

My approach throughout this thesis has been to attempt to keep one eye on the main source material of travelogues and their associated texts, and the other on the "future" of British Mandate policies, Zionist attitudes, and the practices of the Israeli state. This has its weaknesses as well as strengths. An overreliance on hindsight when dealing with this topic can lead to histories of nineteenth-century English Zionism which Bar-Yosef warns 'read like a dot-to-dot drawing, connecting Lord Shaftesbury, George Eliot, and Laurence Oliphant with some of their lesser-known contemporaries, only to reveal, in due course, a neatly sketched draft of the Balfour Declaration'.[9] On the other hand, as Pappe has noted, much about the history of settler colonialism in Palestine lends itself to an investigative approach which 'looks to the past in order to understand the present and […] interprets the past out of the present'.[10] To avoid accusations of taking a mechanically deterministic view of the relationship of travellers' texts to later events, ideologies and policies, only in a few cases where it can clearly be quantified (as in some cases in Chapter Eleven) have I asserted travellers' direct influence on specific phenomena. Elsewhere, and throughout the thesis, I demonstrate that travellers' views on Palestine formed genre-spanning *doxa*, which predated British and Zionist attitudes which significantly resembled them.[11] I do this by presenting evidence collected from the travelogues in the form of direct quotations, layered upon each other, allowing the texts to speak for themselves, demonstrating their intertextuality, and showing that most notions about Palestine were not the opinions of this-or-that individual traveller, but formed a prominent discourse. This evidence is juxtaposed alongside discussion of later events to show that, whatever British Mandate and Zionist attitudes were, they were certainly not original.

As any reader of the Palestine travelogues quickly learns, Victorian and Edwardian traveller-writers were categorically incapable of expressing themselves succinctly, and their often very substantial texts contain much that is marginal or completely irrelevant to the non-Biblical Palestine. While the latter is a noteworthy fact

[9] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 183
[10] Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach" in Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London: Routledge, 1999), 72-85, p. 72 (editor's comment)
[11] For *doxa*, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977)

in itself, contributing to the obscuring of contemporary Palestine in travel writing, it also means that the analyst of such texts requires a strong tool for sifting through masses of verbal detritus and identifying the passages which most clearly evidence the development of a discourse justifying the (settler) colonisation of Palestine. The principles and techniques of critical discourse analysis I have found to be very helpful in analysing the texts. Teun van Dijk, a prominent figure in academic discourse analysis, defines critical discourse analysis as 'a study of the relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the position of the discourse analyst in such social relationships'. Van Dijk passionately argues for a socially responsible and engaged form of scholarship, writing that 'CDA should deal primarily with the discourse dimensions of power abuse and the injustice and inequality that result from it', and that the work which is produced should be characterised by 'solidarity with those who need it most'. This strongly accords with my own sentiments; while concentrating my attention on the travellers of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain, their texts and the discourse contained within, my concern is with how the effects of this discourse have continued to be felt by the Palestinian people.

Critical discourse analysis is particularly as a flexible approach which can be applied to a wide variety of texts and speech acts through which power is manifested. 'CDA does not primarily aim to contribute to a specific discipline, paradigm, school or discourse theory', van Dijk states; 'theories, descriptions, methods and empirical work are chosen or elaborated as a function of their relevance for the realisation of such a sociopolitical goal'. A multidisciplinary scope, such as I have tried to adopt here – constantly contextualising the travelogues within wider literary trends, the social attitudes of Victorian and Edwardian Britain, and the political history of the West's encounter with Palestine – is key to the fulfilment of the complex task of defining a discourse. The critical theories of Orientalism, travel writing, settler colonialism and Zionism, as discussed in the previous chapter, can thus complement the performance of critical discourse analysis, and in fact provide the frames of reference through which analysis is performed.

Late Ottoman Palestine provides a special methodological challenge to a narrow approach to what constitutes power: as Palestine was not a British colony, British travellers had little or no formal political power over the land and people, though they often acted and wrote as if they did, and as if it was only a matter of time until Palestine was colonised under a British flag. An understanding of the Western (and

white) supremacy underlying the Orientalist worldview, and prominent beliefs about a connection between Britain, the Jews and Palestine (whether or not this was accompanied by public adherence to prophecy), help to explain this, and why attitudes similar in many ways to those in already-colonised contexts were expressed in the Palestine travelogues.

Power and dominance are enacted directly in speech and text from a dominant group addressing a subordinate group, but as van Dijk notes, are also enacted in internal conversations among members of dominant groups. With the example of politicians' and the media's discourse around ethnic minority communities, van Dijk writes that such discourse is 'geared towards the production or activation of an episodic mental model about ethnic minorities, in such a way that this model will in turn confirm negative attitudes and ideologies in the audience'. A very similar dynamic is present in the Palestine travelogues, and in each chapter of my thesis I have explored the genre thematically, searching for generic examples of negative language on different aspects of Palestine and the Palestinians. Focusing on negative representation and language calculated to frame Palestine as a region fit for colonisation, I have not neglected instances of more positive representation; yet in most instances the technique of critical discourse analysis and the theoretical perspectives I draw upon reveal, I argue, that "positive" language often served the same ends as negative representation.

A final point raised by van Dijk I believe important to reiterate here, relates to the question of positionality. For discourse analysis to be truly critical, the researcher, particularly when they share much of the social background of the dominant group they are discussing, must be aware of their own relationship to the power which they study. 'There cannot be an aloof, let alone a "neutral", position of critical scholars', as van Dijk argues, and unfortunately too many 'male or white scholars', by claiming to 'despise or discredit such partisanship […] thereby show how partisan they are in the first place'.[12] Even Said, a Palestinian by birth and committed to the Palestinian national cause throughout his life, wrote with awareness of the possible implications of his American residency and citizenship, and the location of his intellectual development being within the Western academy, when he underlined the importance of 'being aware, however dimly, that one belongs to a power with definite interests in

[12] Teun A. van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis", *Discourse & Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, *SPECIAL ISSUE: Critical Discourse Analysis* (1993), 249-283, pp. 249, 252, 263, 253

the Orient, and more important, that one belongs to a part of the earth with a definite history of involvement in the Orient' when writing anything about the region.[13]

As a white, middle-class Briton from a (largely secularised) Anglican background, I have felt qualified to offer comment upon the travelogues, the Victorian prose of which is instinctively familiar to me. I write from within a formal higher education system which is historically complicit in the development of Orientalist doctrines and the perpetuation of British colonialism, and in which, as Priyamvada Gopal has pointed out, 'a retrograde strain of making the so-called case for colonialism is now resurgent', despite growing student- and staff-led efforts at decolonisation.[14] My personal and cultural relationship with the texts I analyse is far-removed from that of a Palestinian, whose life will have been shaped by the forces unleashed by the Peaceful Crusade and the decades of British colonisation and Israeli settler colonisation which have followed it, a fact I have tried to keep in mind as I have researched and written. At the outset of this research, I thus state openly: it is my hope that an investigation of how colonialism and settler colonialism were theorised and formulated in Palestine over a century ago, the cause of justice and Palestine's future decolonisation might be advanced in some way, however small.

[13] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 11
[14] Priyamvada Gopal, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London and New York: Verso, 2019), p. viii

## CHAPTER FOUR

## 'The Characteristic of an Untravelled Peasant': The Representation of Muslims and Islam

The next four chapters focus on travellers' representation of the people of Palestine: Muslims, Christians, Jews, and other minority groups. Western travellers viewed the population as diverse and divided, with collective characteristics determined to a significant extent by religion, despite recent research showing a shared identity across sects developing at the end of Ottoman rule.[1] Travellers' attitude was an outgrowth of what Edward Said has noted was Europe's 'impulse to classify nature and man into types' from the eighteenth century onward, which provided a powerful impetus for the Orientalist outlook.[2]

While, by dividing its analysis of the representation of the Palestinians by religious groupings, this thesis reproduces the discursive divisions made by the travellers, travellers' discursive construction of each of the communities deserve to be studied separately. Here, this thesis begins with Muslims and Islam, encountered in a variety of aspects from the vernacular Islam of rural regions to the Islamic holy sites in some towns. The first two sections of this chapter focus on the Muslims of rural villages, the *fellahin*, while the last section, explores travellers' attitudes to the Islamic religion and the most important Islamic site in Palestine, the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem.

[1] See Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2011)
[2] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 119

## I: 'Some Stealthy, Dumb Being from Another Planet': Representing the Muslim *Fellahin*

British traveller-writers encountered the Muslim *fellahin* – the majority of Palestine's population – more extensively than any other group.[3] As discussed in Chapter Eight, travellers approached a journey in the Holy Land as travel through rural districts between Biblical sites. Travellers were close to the *fellahin* through most of the countryside and the villages through which they passed, though most Westerners failed to establish meaningful relationships with indigenous Palestinians. As Alexander Kinglake noted in *Eothen*, it was only 'rarely, very rarely' that a traveller might 'gain an opportunity of seeing the familiar and indoor life of the people'.[4]

While Mary Louise Pratt's definition of the 'contact zone' between Western travellers and indigenous people includes the construction of new understandings, traveller-writers failed to reach any understanding of the indigenous Palestinian majority.[5] Unable to interpret the peasantry except through an Evangelical and Orientalist worldview, and usually with a complete ignorance of Arabic (Arthur Copping in *A Journalist in the Holy Land* described the sound of the language as 'a company of perturbed monkeys and parrots'), traveller-writers often presented contradictory images of the *fellahin*. The gulf separating Western travellers from Palestinians was powerfully articulated by Copping. Walking alone near 'Akka, Copping reported seeing 'a strange figure in dilapidated vestments, a man of dark visage, who held in his right hand a great curved blade of shining steel'. Copping's initial reaction was fear, 'were his behaviour to prove as warlike as his looks', yet his subsequent account effectively illustrated travellers' frequent misinterpretations of the *fellahin*:

> Had I known the necessary Arabic words, I should certainly have wished him good afternoon, little as that stern, impassive face invited a friendly greeting. We met, I say; but it was scarcely a meeting. Neither of us stopped, or paused, or smiled, or spoke. And we passed so close to one another that his brown garments almost touched me.

Copping wondered 'how, behind that mask of stolid indifference, he accounted

[3] Campos provides a figure of 84 per cent of all Muslims (rural and urban) in Palestine at the turn of the twentieth century, out of a total population of 700,000 to 750,000. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, p. 12
[4] Alexander William Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), p. 101
[5] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992), pp. 4, 5

for finding a lonely Western foreigner loitering about in that solitude. For my part, it was as though I had met some stealthy, dumb being from another planet'.[6] Copping wondered how he appeared to a Palestinian, yet it was still the other who was the 'being from another planet', though Copping was the foreign visitor. There was very little sense of shared humanity sensed by travellers between themselves and Palestinians who were, as Agnes Smith put it in her *Eastern Pilgrims*, 'Mohammedans and barbarians'.[7] Operating through much of travellers' representation of Palestinians, particularly Muslims, was what Teun van Dijk calls 'the enactment of white group dominance' through 'positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation'.[8]

While traveller-writers could differentiate between certain Palestinians, such as their dragomans or Bedouin guides, the *fellahin* appeared as a faceless mass. Judgements could be made about entire villages, and one village or even individual could stand as a synecdoche for the entire collective. Western travellers viewed Palestinians as a primitive people with their own characteristics, but who could still be lumped together with other Oriental societies in opposition to European civilisation. As John Mills stated in his *Three Months' Residence at Nablus*, 'the whole people of Palestine, and of the East generally, are very much alike'.[9] The Oriental was not an individual, but, as Said notes, 'a kind of ideal and unchanging abstraction', the creation of 'a nexus of knowledge and power […] in a sense obliterating him as a human being'.[10] Some traveller-writers represented the Palestinian *fellahin* favourably in some respects, others with hostility, but all views were coloured to some extent by Orientalism's archetypal Oriental.

Positive descriptions of the Muslim *fellahin* revolved around experiences of good treatment received by travellers, such as politeness and hospitality. These characteristics were framed as the natural qualities of a primitive people uncorrupted by the social vices existing in the West and among upper classes of Orientals. 'They are industrious and honest, until a rise in the social scale puts the idea of rapacity into their heads', averred Agnes Smith. 'You will find them most polite and attentive to

[6] Arthur E. Copping, *A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), pp. 3, 97
[7] Agnes Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims: The Travels of Three Ladies* (London: Hurstt and Blackett, 1870), p. 1
[8] Teun A. van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis", *Discourse & Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, *SPECIAL ISSUE: Critical Discourse Analysis* (1993), 249-283, pp. 263, 264
[9] John Mills, *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans* (London: John Murray, 1864), p. 165
[10] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 8, 27

strangers'.[11] Isabel Burton wrote in *The Inner Life of Syria* that 'the Syrians are excessively intelligent and courteous', while David Morison Ross claimed similarly in *The Cradle of Christianity* that 'nowhere amongst the village folk did we meet with anything but civility'.[12] Laurence Oliphant compared the Muslim *fellahin* favourably to Christian villagers in *The Land of Gilead*, arguing Muslims were 'far more deserving' of Western sympathy, because they were 'more oppressed, more honest, more orderly, and quite as industrious'.[13] In his *Village Life in Palestine*, George Robinson Lees claimed that 'all the simple laws of kindness and hospitality found in the law of God are minutely and carefully observed by the peasants without any knowledge of its existence. They are merely regarded as the customs of their country'.[14] Sometimes, traveller-writers presented the inhabitants of a particular village as demonstrating particularly good qualities. After observing their compassion for an injured bird, Copping described the residents of Lubiah in the Galilee as 'a kind and enlightened people', who 'if indistinguishable in the matter of attire and domestic resources' to other *fellahin*, 'differed in spirit as does night from day'.[15]

Many traveller-writers denigrated the *fellahin*, explicitly or implicitly implying the superiority of Europe. The *fellahin*'s supposed ignorance was commonly asserted. 'The "Fellahheen," or common peasantry of Palestine', James Finn claimed in *Stirring Times*, 'are human beings existing in a very low social condition approaching nearly to barbarism', and 'deplorably ignorant, and in some places even brutish'.[16] Claude Reignier Conder wrote in *Tent Work in Palestine* that 'even the least ignorant know scarcely anything, while the cow-herds and goatherds are very little better than brute beasts'.[17] Ross labelled the *fellahin* as 'uneducated and ignorant', while Haskett Smith similarly wrote that 'the common mass of Orientals are a desperately ignorant lot' in his *Patrollers of Palestine*.[18] Lees argued that Palestinian village houses were 'all

[11] Smith, *Eastern* Pilgrims, p. 37
[12] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 1, p. 263; David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), p. 43
[13] Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), p. 322
[14] George Robinson Lees, *Village Life in Palestine: A Description of the Religion, Home Life, Manners, Customs, Characteristics and Superstitions of the Peasants of the Holy Land, With Reference to the Bible* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911 [1897]), p. 148
[15] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, pp. 121-122
[16] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 2, pp. 181, 184
[17] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), p. 310
[18] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 27; Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 53

erected on the same plan emanating from a mind limited in ideas, devoid even of the capacity of making a straight line, and utterly ignorant of the most elementary details of construction'. Drawing on Biblical discourse, Lees argued that the *fellahin* were 'not gifted with a creative or artistic faculty, being tillers of the soil, or "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (Josh. ix. 27)'. Overall, they possessed 'an intelligence that does not far exceed that of the rudest savage', with minds which were 'primitive and belong to a period remote from the present'.[19]

Some traveller-writers framed Palestinian villagers as childlike. 'Irresponsible and gay, Syrians seem to be grown-up children, and they retain the ways of childhood', wrote John Kelman in *The Holy Land.*[20] Copping represented the people of Sebastia, north of Nablus, as 'a crowd of brown-skinned simpletons, dressed in rags and full of curiosity, who will come clustering around you in a fever of innocent excitement to see your camera, but who will all run helter-skelter away if you so much as say "Boo!" to them'. He scoffed that 'the only difference between adults and children was that the former seemed rather more childish than the latter'.[21]

Mills included a detailed chapter on Palestinians' 'traits of character', inclusive of some of the most common clichés. 'The first and most prominent' characteristic' of a Palestinian, Mills averred, 'is the love of money'. Mills claimed that 'to obtain money, he will work (but not too hard), and beg, and lie, and pilfer […] never did the eyes of a Jew or Gentile glisten more brightly when receiving the idol coin than do his'.[22] Nearly every Palestine travelogue included similar stories of demands for *bakshish*. Cook's *Tourist Handbook for Palestine and Syria* claimed that

> Everywhere, from morning till night, the traveller will be tormented with applications for backsheesh, which has been called the alpha and omega of Eastern travel. It is the first word an infant is taught to lisp; it will probably be the first Arabic word the traveller will hear on arriving in Palestine, and the last as he leaves it.[23]

Mills continued that 'another trait, quite as common, is their untruthfulness', that there was 'no integrity – no honesty of conduct among them', and that 'honesty has left the

[19] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, pp. 75, 87
[20] John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 217
[21] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, p. 185
[22] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. 165-166
[23] Anonymous, *Cook's Tourist Handbook for Palestine and Syria* (London: Thomas Cook & Son, and Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 1876), p. 6

country'.[24] While lambasting the 'uncleanness and brutal immorality' of the *fellahin*, Conder similarly claimed that 'the worst vice of all is their universal untruthfulness. […] A successful liar is spoken of as *shâter ketîr*, or "very clever," and nothing is more respected than the capacity for cheating everyone'. Conder gave this alleged untruthfulness a Biblical (and anti-Semitic) slant: 'may this not be considered as a characteristic of the Semitic people from the days of Jacob downwards?'[25] Lees also informed his readers that 'the first lesson that a boy learns after he can say "father" and "mother" is how to swear', and 'the next stage in his education is to tell a lie'.[26]

Another fault Mills identified was that 'the people are extremely irreligious. There is no country in the world with a greater show of religion in some form or other; but there is no country with less religious sincerity'. This claim related to several of travellers' beliefs, that nominally Muslim Palestinians still preserved the pagan practices of Palestine's ancient inhabitants, and that Islam was a religion of "exterior forms", discussed further below. What Mills admired about Palestinian Muslims, summarised in one paragraph, were their 'no little kindness and hospitality', and their 'sobriety', i.e. abstention from alcohol, in which 'they give an example most worthy to be followed'.[27]

Several travellers commented on the supposed oppression of women in Muslim Palestinian society, a key ingredient of Orientalism's notion of oppressive Islamic rule.[28] At a time when British women were denied many rights now recognised as basic human rights, British travellers, usually male, attempted to claim the moral high ground. In his *A Visit to My Father-Land*, Ridley Haim Herschell proselytised that 'the degradation of the females which prevails in Mahommedan as well as heathen countries, shows how much women owe to that Divine revelation' of Christianity.[29] Lees agreed, also relying on religious rhetoric. 'The position of a woman in a Moslem village is one of the deepest degradation', he claimed. 'In the land where the Saviour lived she is a beast of burden, or one of the articles in her husband's house'. Lees' words revealed the hypocrisy behind Western travellers' perceptions of women's status in Palestine: 'whenever the name of Christ is unknown or dishonoured the

[24] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 165-168
[25] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 299
[26] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, p. 115
[27] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 170, 173
[28] Norman Daniels, *Islam, Europe and Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p. 11
[29] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to My Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843]), p. 46

position of woman is abject and miserable. But where Christianity has taken root and flourished woman has been raised to her rightful estate as the helpmeet of man'.[30]

Another accusation levelled against the *fellahin* was their supposed cruelty to animals. Consensus was absent: William Hepworth Dixon in *The Holy Land* claimed that 'in every part of the East, among every class of people, a man is tender to his horse, his camel, and his ass, beyond the usage of any Christian land'.[31] Other travellers, possibly influenced by the nascent animal rights movement in Victorian Britain, harshly criticised the treatment of animals in Palestine, cementing an image of Orientals as brutal and cruel.[32] 'See him with his beast', James Kean wrote in his *Among the Holy Places* of an archetypal Oriental, 'with heavy club-like stick he thumps his donkey's head, or kicks the helpless beast in the body'.[33] Haskett Smith exclaimed 'there is nothing which makes a fellow's blood boil with indignation like the brutal manner in which most Orientals treat their animals'.[34] Isabel Burton wrote of 'cruelty to animals, here a prevalent and bestial habit, in the hope that some kind-hearted Europeans will, with the consent of the Turkish Government, form a Humane Society, which would go a great way towards civilizing the people'. On one occasion, noticing that locals in her group had neglected a lame animal, Burton accused them of being 'greater brutes than the mule', and threatened the withdrawal of *bakshish*.[35]

A common accusation towards the *fellahin*, contradicting the representations of civility and politeness, was that they posed a danger to travellers. Inhabitants of certain villages gained a particularly bad reputation among travellers. The people of Silwan, a village outside Jerusalem visited by many travellers because of its association with the Biblical Siloam, were regularly represented as threatening. In his *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*, William Thackeray represented the inhabitants of Silwan as 'a colony of ruffians […] who have guns as well as sticks at need', and described his unease at being 'saluted by the scowls of a villanous set of countenances'.[36] Norman Macleod claimed in *Eastward* that Silwan's residents were

[30] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, pp. 114-115
[31] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), p. 58
[32] See Chien-hui Li, "Mobilizing Christianity in the Antivivisection Movement in Victorian Britain", *Journal of Animal Ethics*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall 2012), 141-161
[33] James Kean, *Among the Holy Places: A Pilgrimage Through Palestine* (T. Fisher Unwin, n/d [1895-1906]), p. 379
[34] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 42
[35] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, pp. 121, 244-245
[36] William Makepeace Thackeray [Mr. M.A. Titmarsh], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), pp. 230-231

'notorious thieves – such a collection of scoundreldom as might be the joint product of gipsies, vagabond Jews, and the lowest Arabs'.[37] Josias Leslie Porter similarly described them in *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* as 'lawless, fanatical vagabonds', and claimed they subjected him to 'repeated threats and curses, intermixed now and again with a stone or two'.[38] Finn described the villagers of Sebastia as 'distinguishable by a vile scowling demeanour towards Europeans', while Alexander Boddy dismissed them in his *Days in Galilee* as 'bigoted followers of the Prophet of Mecca, and […] notoriously turbulent'.[39] Whole regions could also be demonised. Dixon claimed that the plain between Ramleh and Jerusalem 'has an evil repute which a good many travellers affirm that it has richly won', and the oppression of the villagers of the area by Ottoman troops was deserved for their 'many and atrocious crimes'.[40] Elizabeth Rundle Charles wrote in her *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* that the *fellahin* of the Galilee were 'often very unfriendly and thievish, indeed, little better than bandits, to defenceless travellers'.[41]

There are several stories in travelogues of attacks on travellers by *fellahin*, the most vividly depicted (fig. 4.1) in John Macgregor's *The Rob Roy on the Jordan*, of which Macgregor's brief capture in the Huleh Valley in northern Palestine formed the centrepiece. Macgregor built up tension from near the beginning:

> In parts of Palestine, where not only no boat had ever been seen but no picture of such a thing which might give an idea of a boat to the Mahommedan mind, the feeling of the spectator on a sight of the canoe generally began with fear, and sometimes ended in a brave attack, as will be told before the end of the Rob Roy's log.

Macgregor played on established notions of Palestinians' ignorance and superstition, alleging that 'while these people had never seen nor heard of a boat, they had all heard about ghosts and water sprites'. He represented the villagers as barbarians, a 'tumultuous rabble', 'dancing in frantic excitement and shouting ferociously'. He luridly lingered on the 'huge naked carcase' of the individual who grabbed his boat. The

[37] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 168
[38] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), p. 87
[39] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, p. 207; Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 114
[40] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 37
[41] Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), pp. 257-258

villagers appeared like dark-skinned savages of colonial nightmares, who could be found from the depths of Africa to the Americas, India, Oceania – and Palestine.

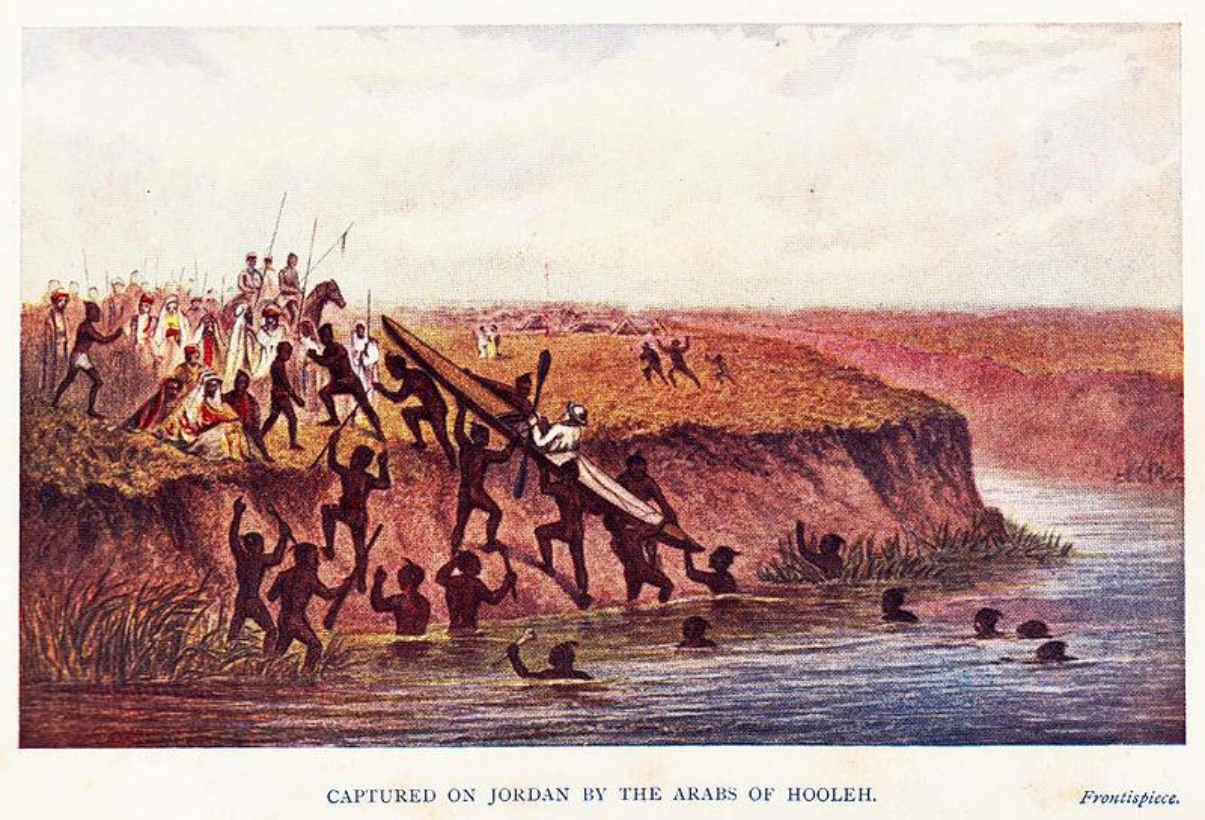


**Figure 4.1:**
**"Captured on Jordan by the Arabs of Hooleh",**
***The Rob Roy on the Jordan* by John Macgregor,**
**frontispiece**

As illustrated, Macgregor demanded to be carried over the heads of his captors, actualising a hierarchy of subservient Orient and dominant West, even while Macgregor was at the villagers' mercy. To guarantee his safety, Macgregor informed the villagers multiple times that he was 'Ingleez', relying on the villagers' fear of the Ottoman authorities' retribution if a European was harmed. His dragoman threatened villagers with a reference to the 1868 British invasion of Ethiopia, in which the Ethiopian forces were routed.[42] Basem Ra'ad notes that after returning to Britain,

[42] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), pp. 57, 223-244

Macgregor staged reenactions of his capture for audiences, similar to "Wild West" shows.[43]

The amplification of these stories in the travelogues gave an impression of Palestine as a much more dangerous place than it really was. As Finn admitted in a letter of 1858, during a disturbed period in the Eastern Mediterranean, 'English travellers, including ladies, are journeying as usual without apprehension, and some Englishmen have just related to me how friendly the peasantry were to them when they lost their road recently by dark night'.[44] However, the constant amplification of tales of danger, as Nancy Stockdale notes, contributed to a portrait of 'the inherent danger of the Holy Land, a location increasingly constructed throughout the nineteenth century (and twentieth century) as a place of timeless conflict and chaos, where life could be snatched away at any moment'.[45] The contrast, implicit or explicit, was with the order which could be imposed by a European empire.

Travellers' encounters with the *fellahin* reinforced British feelings of dominance, despite Palestinians being subjects of another empire. In travellers' minds, the *fellahin*'s "natural" good qualities, their ignorance, and their violent tendencies, added up to the idea that they required firm control. Talal Asad has noted Orientalists' 'tendency to see the characteristic relationship between [Muslim] rulers and their subjects in terms of force and repression on the one side, and of submission, indifference, even cynicism on the other'; traveller-writers portrayed Palestinians as desiring firm control, even, masochistically, violent repression.[46] This accorded with travellers' belief in the people's desire for British rule, discussed in Chapter Eleven. Kinglake claimed that

> the Asiatic seems to be animated with a feeling of profound respect, almost bordering upon affection, for all who have done him any bold and violent wrong, and there is always, too, so much of vague and undefined apprehension mixed up with his really well-founded alarms, that I can

[43] Basem L. Ra'ad, *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean* (London: Pluto Press, 2010), p. 32
[44] Various, *Despatches from Her Majesty's Consuls in the Levant, Respecting Past or Apprehended Disturbances in Syria: 1858 to 1860* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1860), p. 13
[45] Nancy L. Stockdale, "Danger and The Missionary Enterprise: The Murder of Miss Matilda Creasy', in Heleen Murre-van den Berg (ed.), *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 113-132, p. 114
[46] Talal Asad, "Two European Images of Non-European Rule", in Talal Asad (ed.), *Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1973), 103-118, p. 106

> see no limit to the yielding and bending of his mind when it is wrought upon by the idea of power.[47]

Dixon emphasised Orientals' supposed sense of inferiority vis-à-vis Westerners. 'The Frank may be a giaour, an effreet, a son of Shaitan; yet to him has been given (for God is great, and his ways are wonderful) money and steam, the power of the earth and the power of the air', he wrote, using terms frequently put by traveller-writers into the mouths of Muslims as anti-Western terms of abuse. He claimed further that 'the reverence which in the fancy of a Syrian clings to his white brother, is akin to that divinity which in the middle ages and in the language of poetry hedged a king'.[48] Burton argued that 'Syrians are, when they choose to be, the most courteous of people, but you must keep them in order, and if there is any defection it is your fault'. 'Like a woman', she claimed further, 'it is his [the "Syrian"'s] master's power and mighty his external surroundings, his display of force, that subdue him […] then he will bow down and worship that master, he will be proud of belonging to him, and will be his for life and death'.[49] Travellers' fetishisation of violence against the *fellahin* were later given full expression by the brutal policing practices of the British Mandate, particularly at times of resistance such as the 1936-1939 Arab Revolt; many British police officers expressed opinions revealing their views of Palestinians as essentially subhuman.[50]

Charles Warren drew on his archaeological experience to ponder the control which could be leveraged over the Muslim *fellahin* in the event of Palestine's colonisation in his pamphlet *The Land of Promise*. Warren predicted that 'the Moslems generally will not be difficult to keep in order', explaining that

> During the time I excavated at Jerusalem, I drew my workmen from two villages, and soon drilled the men into good order. I sent them where I wanted them, twenty or thirty miles away, without question on their part, and paid them what wages I considered necessary. They would follow Sergeant Birtles like a flock of sheep.

Part of Warren's calculation was his belief that 'many of the Moslems are so for convenience, and if the pressure of Turkey be removed [i.e. Ottoman rule ended], the Moslem religion would be found among but a small proportion of the people'. Warren

[47] Kinglake, *Eothen*, p. 203
[48] Dixon, *Holy Land*, pp. 67-68
[49] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, p. 216, vol. 2, p. 42
[50] See Matthew Hughes, "The Banality of Brutality: British Armed Forces and the Repression of the Arab Revolt in Palestine, 1936-39", *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 124, No. 507 (April 2009), 313-354

believed the *fellahin* 'are certainly not Turks in any degree; they are for the most part not Arabs of Arabia, of the Desert', Islamic religion being thus racially associated with the Ottoman Islamic Caliphate, and the Arabian Peninsula. His claim that 'the people of Palestine are of a very mixed race' partly of 'Canaanitish' origin, was a common notion, as discussed next.[51]

[51] Charles Warren, *The Land of Promise; or, Turkey's Guarantee* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1875), pp. 22, 6

## II: 'The Beasts of the People': The Nationality of the *Fellahin*

Traveller-writers' representation of the Muslim *fellahin* included speculation on their ethno-national origins, based on the "research" of previous travellers, observations of varying superficiality, and interpretations of Biblical narrative. Far from resembling scientific inquiry, this crude, Biblical-influenced ethnography had political undertones, justifying colonial subjugation or even ethnic cleansing, especially through the equation of the contemporary Palestinians to the Canaanites of antiquity.

Despite the Arab conquest of Palestine in the seventh century, the continuity of Arab and/or Islamic rule ever since (barring the Crusades), and Arabic's use by all indigenous Palestinians, many Western travellers were adamant that the *fellahin* were not Arabs. "Arabs" in the travelogues often referred to the nomadic Bedouin; Arabs and *fellahin* became mutually exclusive constructs, with opposing characteristics. As Elias Sanbar notes, there was 'a redefinition of "the Arab," who was no longer referred to as a "Palestinian"'.[52] This has also been a tactic of supporters of Israel who have sought to "de-Arabise" the Palestinians, regardless of the Palestinians' own identity; as Joan Peters in her work of pro-Israel apologia *From Time Immemorial* claimed, citing the texts of nineteenth-century travellers as evidence, 'the majority of genuine "Arabs" among the sparse population in the "ruined" country […] were Arabian tribal nomads'.[53] One of the few travellers to accept settled Palestinians as Arabs was Mary Eliza Rogers, who in *Domestic Life in Palestine* referred to 'the people of Palestine generally as Arabs; for though they are a mixed race, they all call themselves "Arabs," or "sons of the Arabs," and Arabic is their mother-tongue'. Rogers attributed Arab-ness to Muslims while separating them ethnically from Palestinian Christians: 'the Christians of the land are said to be of pure Syrian origin, while the Moslems are chiefly descended from the Arabians who settled in the towns and villages of Syria and Palestine in the seventh and eighth centuries'.[54] This resembled other discursive methods used by travellers to divide Muslim from Christian in Palestine, as discussed in the next chapter.

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[52] Elias Sanbar, "The Invention of the Holy Land" in Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 292-296, p. 295

[53] Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p. 170

[54] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p. viii

Many traveller-writers from the later nineteenth century onwards attributed the Palestinian *fellahin* with 'Syrian', pre-Arab and pre-Israelite, origins. Conder based this claim on a 'general preservation of the names of ancient sites in Palestine', and on Muslims' religious traditions, which he claimed were similar to pre-Israelite practices in Palestine. 'In almost every village in the country a small building surmounted by a whitewashed dome is observable, being the sacred chapel of the place', Conder claimed, a continuation of 'the "places" of the Canaanites, which Israel was commanded to destroy'. Combining his exploration in Palestine with the Bible, he concluded that

> The descent of the Fellahîn, or "tillers," may be traced from older inhabitants of Palestine, and perhaps from the pre-Israelite population, which […] was, as we may gather from the Bible, never entirely outrooted, but remained in the land […] as a distinct people, though members of the same great family (the Semitic race), regarded as inferior to the Jewish dominant class, "hewers of wood," "drawers of water," "the beasts of the people."

Conder's Biblical quotations drew attention to the Israelites' chosen status, and their superiority over the modern Palestinians' ancestors. With this logic, if it were 'justifiable to dub the Fellahîn by the simple title of "modern Canaanites"', their subservience to – or removal by – Zionist settlers, whom Conder enthusiastically supported, might also be justified, as discussed below.[55]

Charles Wilson applied this idea to Jerusalem's urban residents, writing in *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* that 'the Moslems belong for the most part to the same race as the peasantry of Palestine, representatives it may be, though with a large intermixture of foreign blood, of the Jebusite that dwelt in the land'.[56] Oliphant in *Haifa* claimed that both Muslims and Christians 'were the descendants of those ancient Canaanites whom the conquering Jews failed to drive out of the country during the entire period of their occupation of it, though they doubtless served their conquerors as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and as farm-servants generally'.[57] Richard Temple wrote in *Palestine Illustrated* that the *fellahin* 'are the

[55] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 303-304, 335
[56] Charles W. Wilson, "Jerusalem" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 1, 1-120, p. 118
[57] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), p. 109

veritable descendants of the Canaanites described in the Bible, of the Jebusites and of the Amorites'. While they maintained some 'ancient rites and observances', Temple admitted that at present 'ordinarily they appear to be Muhammadans, simply following the religious rules and regulations of their masters the Turks'.[58] Kelman reasoned that, as the *fellahin* were 'conservative to the last degree, and any radical change seems an impossibility among them', they were likely to be ethnically and culturally almost identical to Palestine's ancient inhabitants.[59] As Ada Goodrich-Freer wrote in *Inner Jerusalem*, 'the "native" is of an older race than that which immigrated here under Abraham four thousand years ago'.[60]

Like Biblical archaeology, which used Palestine's existing landscape to make "discoveries" of the Biblical era, the *fellahin* were studied by Westerners for what they might reveal about the ancient population. This was exemplified in *Village Life in Palestine* by George Robinson Lees, and *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* by James Neil. Lees claimed the *fellahin* were 'the descendants of the mixed marriages of the children of Israel with the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, through whom they were led into the sin of idolatry'. Slighting the peasantry's Islamic faith, Lees claimed their 'profession of Mohammedanism is but the superstructure […] of a building whose foundation is raised on the aboriginal mind'. Arguing that 'their existence is in itself a confirmation of Holy Writ, and a corroboration of the truth of the word of God', Lees expressed his belief that the *fellahin* who 'have not developed the sense of inquiry into the ways of the outer world, offer a field for investigation that is almost unbroken'.[61] While Lees emphasised the Old Testament, Neil also found the people of the New Testament in Palestinian villagers. As well as being 'the *'am ha-arets*, "the people of the land" of the Hebrew Bible', the *fellahin* were '"the masses," of the New Testament, of whom we read when the Master spoke "they heard Him gladly"'. Neil went so far as to claim that '"the mother of Jesus" must have dressed and lived as one of these *fellahhat* [female peasants]', and 'the Lord Jesus was unquestionably a *fellahh*, as were most of the apostles. Nothing is clearer than this'.[62]

Traveller-writers' assertions of the indigeneity of the Muslim *fellahin* of Palestine (in contrast to Christians, often de-indigenised by travellers) contrasts with the State

[58] Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated.* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1888), pp. 125-127
[59] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 74
[60] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), p. 18
[61] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, pp. 1, 30, 63-64
[62] James Neil, *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* (London: Cassell and Company, 1913), pp. 3, 5, 7

of Israel's later attempts to deny Palestinians' indigeneity.[63] Yet despite this, and the abovementioned authors' association of the *fellahin* with the holiest figures in the Christian pantheon, the Israelites and pre-Israelite population, there was a sinister dimension to discursively framing the Palestinians as contemporary Canaanites. Conder and Oliphant, both quoting the Biblical 'hewers of wood' to describe the ancient indigenous people, both supported the colonisation of Palestine by Jews and/or a European power, using the labour of 'the sturdy stock of the native Moslem race', as Conder wrote.[64] This meant the subjugation of the Palestinians to European dominance, as with the Canaanites to the ancient Hebrews.

But the Canaanite label would also, eventually, be used to justify the expulsion of indigenous people. In a Eurocentric reading of the Bible, the Canaanites and other indigenous groups in the Holy Land appear as primitive, savage peoples, cleared aside in order for progress.[65] The notion of a territory being a "promised land" for settlers, and the indigenous people living there being "Canaanites", "Philistines" or "Amalekites", whom the settlers could expel, was already used in settler colonial contexts, particularly North America.[66] It was simple to use the Biblical story to justify the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948, as some Zionist leaders did.[67] Travellers such as Conder and Wilson who sought to prove their theories regarding the Palestinians' Canaanite ancestry, the authors of Biblical pseudo-ethnographies analysing the living peasantry as relics of the past, and other traveller-writers who repeated these claims, disseminated these views in the West.

A related question to the "national origin" of the *fellahin*, was whether they had a European-style nationalist consciousness. The answer from all who considered the issue was emphatically negative. Palestinian villagers were presented as being preoccupied with petty feuds, with narrow group interests in lieu of a unifying national consciousness held as a hallmark of civilisation. Dixon complained that 'every one's hand is raised against his fellow. The charities and affinities which in Europe soften men's hearts are here unknown. Love of country and pride of race, are phrases which

[63] See Ra'ad, *Hidden Histories*, pp. 123-141
[64] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 387
[65] See Michael Prior, *The Bible and Colonialism: A Moral Critique* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997)
[66] See Nur Masalha, "Civil Liberation Theology in Palestine: Indigenous, Secular-Humanist, and Post-Colonial Perspectives" in Nur Masalha and Lisa Isherwood (eds.), *Theologies of Liberation in Palestine-Israel: Indigenous, Contextual, and Postcolonial Perspectives* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2014), 193-214
[67] Israel Shahak, "The "Historical Right" and the Other Holocaust", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Spring 1981), 27-34. Some Palestinians have also claimed Canaanite ancestry in order to reaffirm their connection in their country. See Hatem Bazian, "The Indigenous Palestinians: Twice Dispossessed by the Biblical Text", *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2014), 40-43

convey no meaning to a Syrian ear'.[68] Temple claimed that the *fellahin* 'have, indeed, few national traits, and little of political life or tribal organization', allowing them only 'something like self-government in their villages under the local patriarch or Shekh'.[69]

Traveller-writers sometimes noted the *fellahin*'s attachment to their land, but this was, in travellers' minds, in place of nationalist feeling. 'Few can conceive the extent of the affection a Fellah bears for his home and country, the country around his dwelling, for he has no national pride', wrote Lees. He claimed that 'of national unity there is none. They do not even know what it means, nor can they understand the feeling of patriotism that links people together into a brotherhood that co-operates for the well-being of the mother country'.[70]

Finn made an overtly racist contribution on this theme. 'It has been often said that there is no such thing as patriotism among them', Finn wrote of the Palestinians. 'True, the word "patriotism" does not exist in their language', Finn began. 'The only term of the kind which the Arabic newspapers have adopted as its equivalent, is "love of home," "*mohhabet el watan.*" *Hhab el wattan min el aimân* – "The love of country is an article of faith, i.e. religion"'. He then revealed profound contempt for non-Europeans:

> But this is not patriotism; it might be the characteristic of an untravelled peasant, whether in Yorkshire or in Galilee; it has no reference to external countries in their relation with one's own. It is the virtue of a cat or a dog, but not the great sentiment that animated the ancient Israelites, the sentiment whose office it is to uphold the honour of one's own land against all comers; that which makes a man righteously jealous of the distinction of being a Frenchman, an American, a Russian, or a Briton […][71]

Finn's recourse to the ancient Israelites was highly significant. For Evangelicals, the Biblical Israelites were the nation *par excellence*. Traveller-writers viewed the Palestinian *fellahin* as disunited, lacking national consciousness, unlike the Israelites and contemporary Jews, but like the Canaanites – and thus, perhaps, similarly destined for subordination or expulsion.

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[68] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 112
[69] Temple, *Palestine Illustrated*, p. 124
[70] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, p. 70
[71] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 178

Ironically, as traveller-writers made these judgements, national consciousness was emerging. The 1834 revolt against Egyptian rule united people across Palestine.[72] In subsequent decades, developments in local politics, education, and the press, laid the foundations of national identity, spreading to rural districts with the increasing dispossession of *fellahin* by Zionist colonies, as Rashid Khalidi has noted.[73] Western travellers, outside Palestinian society, usually ignorant of Arabic, and infused with Orientalism, were almost entirely blind to these developments. Nevertheless, the notion that the Palestinians were inferior to Europeans and incapable of self-government because of their lack of national consciousness, was a guiding principle during the British occupation of Palestine. European-style nationhood was considered a crucial factor in the awarding of national rights; in the Balfour Declaration, this attitude was present in the recognition of a need for 'a national home for the Jewish people', indicating the "national" status of Jews, but only 'civil and religious rights' for 'existing non-Jewish communities'.

Israel has continued the denial of Palestinian national identity and rights. Many of the arguments noted above were replicated by Zionist leaders. Even during the Arab Revolt in Palestine, Zionist officials denied that Palestinians' actions evidenced nationalist consciousness, in line with 'the long-standing Zionist consensus in terms of which Jews were the only national group in Palestine', as Ahmad Sa'di has noted.[74] Yitzhak Ben-Zvi (1884-1963), second President of Israel, stated that Palestinians were 'Arabs in language and culture but by origin and race are mixed and composed of different elements […] As is proven by its national, religious and racial composition, the population of this country is not of one national character and do not constitute a single nation'.[75] Most famously, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir (1898-1978) claimed the nonexistence of the Palestinian people; as Khalidi notes, Palestinian identity 'has since its beginnings struggled for acceptance and legitimacy in the outside world, and even for its very existence as a category of being'.[76] In nineteenth and early twentieth century travelogues, the Palestinians, especially the Muslim *fellahin*, were cast as

[72] 'Adel Manna', "Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Rebellions in Palestine", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Autumn, 1994), 51-66
[73] Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 35-88
[74] Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Modernization as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (May 1997), 25-48, p. 29
[75] Quoted in Joseph Massad, "Against Self-Determination", *Humanity Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 2018), 161-191, p. 177
[76] Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, p. 147

perpetual Canaanites, lacking national identity, and always second, at best, to the Jewish settlers “returning” to the Holy Land.

### III.I: 'Incoherent Rhapsodies': Representing Islam

While travellers approached Palestine as the Judeo-Christian Holy Land, they were confronted with the fact that the Palestine they found had a predominantly Muslim populace, and was part of an Islamic empire. As Kelman stated, 'one is never out of sight of Mohammedan religion for an hour of travel in Syria'.[77] Commentary on Islam thus formed a part of almost all Palestine travelogues. The conflictual history, and colonial present, between the West and the Islam, shaped traveller-writers' representations.[78]

By the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire posed no threat to the West; it was the "sick man of Europe", threatened by European empires. Several travellers predicted that as the Ottoman Empire weakened, so would Islam, which would be Europe's and Britain's gain. Kinglake, for instance, envisioned a future when 'Islam will wither away, and the Englishman, leaning far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the Faithful'; William Henry Bartlett in his *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* expressed his belief that 'the decline of Mahomedanism is inevitable, from the spirit of the age' and the spread of 'European science and habits'; Elizabeth Charles wrote of 'Mohammedanism which is itself dead!'[79] Kelman claimed that while Prophet Mohammad's 'dead hand […] has held the land these thirteen centuries […] the future of the land lies with Christ'.[80]

Many traveller-writers argued that Islam was a religion of rituals, not spirituality. 'Moslems, both men and women, have the name of "Allah" constantly on their lips; but they do not appear to realise the presence and power of God, or to be conscious of spiritual communion with Him', complained Mary Rogers. Prayers were 'reduced to ceremonial forms; while the words uttered are, in many instances, sublime and magnificent'.[81] Similarly, Kean claimed that while the Muslim 'leaves nothing to be desired' in 'paying due regard to all the paraphernalia of religion', ultimately, 'like the [non-Western] Christian, the Muslim comes short of his religious profession'.[82]

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[77] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 161
[78] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 59-60
[79] Kinglake, *Eothen*, p. 324; William Henry Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1844), p. 197; Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 30
[80] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 292
[81] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 232-233
[82] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 379

While cities were recognised centres of Islamic learning – Frederick Treves in *The Land That Is Desolate* described Islamic scholars in Jerusalem with *Arabian Nights*-style imagery as 'learned professors from a forgotten university' and even 'necromancers' able 'to start the distilling of the elixir of life' – *fellahin* were represented as only nominally Muslim, ignorant of Islam's doctrines.[83] Lees linked this to Palestinians' supposed Canaanite heritage. Despite the 'appearance of the faith of Islam', Lees argued that the Arab and Islamic conquest of Palestine had had only a 'meagre' effect. 'Every Ottoman subject that turns to the Kiblah at Mecca is firmly convinced that he is a Moslem', Lees wrote,

> and in every act of devotion, every superstitious belief, pilgrimage, fast and festival he only carries out the injunctions of the Prophet. In reality he knows nothing of that religion unless he has been educated in the schools of the cities, privileges never granted to Fellaheen. Indeed peasants living far from cities in remote country districts do not even know how to say their prayers.

Lees accused the *fellahin* of being 'practically heathen, believing in charms both manifold and curious, holy tombs, sacred groves, strange places set apart for devotional purposes, and spirits with good or evil intent', as did the Canaanites.[84] Rather than these practices being seen as vernacular Islamic expressions, they were seen as entirely negating Islam.[85] Said's claim that Orientalists perceived 'the Arab Near East' as a region 'where Islam was supposed to define cultural and racial characteristics', cannot quite be applied to travellers' views of Palestinians; what defined the *fellahin*, in their eyes, was a much older heritage of far greater significance than their Islam, merely skin deep.[86]

Yet Islam still posed a challenge to travellers who attempted to reconcile the contemporary reality of Palestine with their mental image. Islam appeared as alien usurper in a rightfully Christian land. 'How wonderful, that in the mysterious providence of God the religion of Mahomet, the false prophet, has been permitted to spread far more widely than the religion of His well-beloved Son!' exclaimed Herschell after witnessing a praying Muslim. 'And the followers of the false prophet now rule in the

[83] Frederick Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1912), p. 52
[84] Lees, *Village Life in Palestine*, pp. 30, 33-34
[85] For a brief discussion of these popular forms of Islam in Palestine, see Ilan Pappe, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 16
[86] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 41

land that God gave to his chosen people; the land where Jesus dwelt and communicated the light of truth'.[87] Andrew Russell wrote similarly in his *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, 'that in Palestine, that land in which our Saviour lived […] the inhabitants of that country should still have continued to reject the Saviour, and have preferred Mohammed to Jesus, is a circumstance at which we can never cease to be astonished'.[88]

Despite the Ottoman Empire's weakness, some travellers still perceived Islam as a threat. This was brought into focus by the Indian Mutiny of 1857; many commentators had blamed its outbreak on Islamic opposition to the East India Company's rule in India.[89] John Wilson claimed in the 1840s in *The Lands of the Bible* that Indian Muslims were 'not insensible to the general uprightness of our [i.e. the East India Company's] administration', and that Palestinian Muslims were 'below them in regard to character and conduct, and fiercer and more bigoted in religion'.[90] Yet the Mutiny alerted Westerners to what they viewed as a militant Islam. None was so conscious of this threat as Finn, British Consul in Jerusalem. Finn envisaged a nightmare scenario, in which

> the Green Flag must be unfurled, the Jehâd (Holy War) must be proclaimed against all Christians – in Circassia and Asiatic Russia – in Algeria against the French – in India against the English – all true believers would rise as one man, and, Inshallah! it would not be long before the last great triumph, the coming of Mohammed, and victory for ever to Islâm.

'Thousands and millions of men, women, and children', Finn warned, were 'ready, at whatever sacrifice, to act blindly' on their beliefs, predisposing them to hatred of everything Europe stood for.

What travellers interpreted as Islamic fanaticism (contradicting their belief in Palestinians' only nominal Islam) and hatred of Europe and Christianity, also posed a danger in the Eastern Mediterranean, providing 'the stimulus of bloody excitement' to the *fellahin*.[91] Finn, Mills and Rogers retold the events of an April 1856 uprising in

[87] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 72
[88] Andrew Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities Past and Present. Lectures Delivered on Sunday Evenings in Leslie Parish Church* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1890), p. 149
[89] Ramesh Rawat, "Perception of 1857", *Social Scientist*, Vol. 35, no. 11-12 (November - December 2007), 15-28
[90] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (Edinburgh: William White and Co., 1847), Volume 2, pp. 702-703
[91] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, pp. 346, vol. 2, p. 184

Nablus, also reported in numerous newspapers, in which several Christians were killed and European flags and a church bell destroyed after a British missionary killed a Muslim, discussed in Chapter Ten.[92] On a much larger scale was the violence in Damascus in 1860, in which perhaps three thousand Christians were killed.[93] These events reflected complex dynamics of local politics, dissatisfaction with Ottoman rule, and suspicion at the growing presence of the West in the region; however, travellers painted a picture of an Islam implacably hostile to Christianity and modernity, and helpless Christian communities in need of Western protection, as discussed in the next chapter. Macleod reflected on the events to make a statement on Islam's threat:

> That fearful massacre was the true expression of Islam, the logical application of its principles. From Delhi to Jeddah, wherever it dare reveal itself, its spirit is the same. Nor can I agree with those who think that this is the last of the massacres. The last sacrifice by Islam will be coincident with its last breath.

Macleod admitted that some Muslims were 'better than their beliefs' – the exiled Algerian leader residing in Damascus, Amir 'Abd al-Qadir (1808-1883), was popular among travellers, described as 'every inch a Sultan' by Isabel Burton – but these were exceptions.[94] The "good Muslims" admired by Orientalists were characterised as acting in spite of the violent essence of their faith, rather than manifesting any positive aspects of it.

A characteristically colonial contribution on Islam came from Oliphant in his 1882 essay "The Jew and the Eastern Question". Oliphant wrote in the aftermath of the outbreak of anti-Semitic pogroms in the Russian Empire, and the 'Urabi Revolt in Egypt, in which supporters of the nationalist general Ahmad 'Urabi (1841-1897) demanded the dismantling of the Khedivate, deeply indebted to the West, and attacked European symbols; 'Urabi's uprising, seen from the West as another manifestation of Islamic fanaticism, was finally quashed with the British occupation of Egypt. Oliphant linked the Russian attacks on Jews with the Egyptian revolt against European influence, concluding that if the West had rejected the Jews, and the East

[92] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 424-440; Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 101-102; Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 293-296; also see Gabriel Polley, "'Down with the Bell!' The Nāblus Uprising of April 1856', *Romance, Revolution and Reform: The Journal of the Southampton Centre for Nineteenth Century Research*, Vol. 2, *Resistance in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2020), 12-35

[93] Ussama Makdisi, *The Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), p. 54

[94] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 293; Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 124

had rejected the West, the solution to both problems was the transplantation to Muslim lands of the Jews, who would form a bulwark of European influence. Framing the meeting between Islam and (Western) Christianity as a clash of civilisations, Oliphant described 'the Moslem code of morality' as 'repulsive', and claimed that 'assimilation is socially impossible between the Mussulman and the Christian as between the descendants of Ishmael and those of Jacob'. Oliphant presented Islam as an entirely backward force:

> So far as the Moslem is concerned, instead of yielding to the influences of civilisation, they only tend to arouse his fanaticism. Totally unable to adapt himself to them socially or politically, be finds himself in the presence of a force, the insidious character of which he is unable to resist, and beneath which he instinctively feels he is destined to succumb, if he cannot successfully oppose its advance by the sword. Hence we have the idea of a *jehad*, or religious war, engrafted in his nature; he is trained from his earliest childhood to a hatred of the Ghiaour, and cherishes through life the hope that the day may come when an opportunity may arise for giving it forcible expression.

While Zionism meant Judaism was starting to 'palpitate with the quickening currents of a new life', 'the forces of Islam were preparing instinctively for a death-struggle'. Oliphant concluded in language in retrospect highly sinister: that 'if the final solution of the "Eastern Question" involves the doom of the Moslem, it opens up his future destiny to the Jew'.[95]

Some traveller-writers noted positive aspects of Islam, corresponding to Evangelicals' puritan tastes, which travellers saw reflected in the simplicity of Muslims' worship. 'The Mahommedan has a plain and majestic ritual, whatever we may think of the meaning of his prayers' wrote Macgregor (fig. 4.2). 'His mosque has no idols, or pictures, or ornaments, or pews, but on a carpet, or on a mat, or on the floor, he kneels before God'. He qualified this, adding that 'to pray thus before men – a characteristic of outward religion – is all the more easy if it does not clearly signify that the worshipper is yielding what is asked by the demand, "My son, give me thine heart"'.[96] Macleod commented approvingly on mosques:

[95] Laurence Oliphant, "The Jew and the Eastern Question", *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, Vol. 12, No. 66 (August 1882), 242-255, pp. 244, 254, 255
[96] Macgregor, *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, pp. 29-30

> In its interior, the mosque always struck me as a most impressive place of worship. Perhaps my Presbyterian prejudices dispose me to acquiesce in its perfect simplicity. […] The utmost decorum and reverence are everywhere visible; no hum of voices is heard, nor even footsteps, nor is there anything visible which can distract or arrest the attention of the worshippers.[97]


**Figure 4.2:**
**"Attitudes of the Mahometan during his Devotions",**
***Eastward* by Norman Macleod,**
**page 25**

Some traveller-writers framed Islam as a puritan reaction against Eastern Christianity. Ross, for whom Islam was 'a sort of stunted Judaism' with 'its roots in the Old Testament religion', claimed that 'it was the idolatry of the popular Christianity with which he was acquainted, the worship of saints and images and relics, that roused the indignation of Mohammed'.[98] Charles Biggs wrote similarly in his *Six Months in Jerusalem* that 'Mahometanism is, in one of its aspects, a Puritan revolt […] it represents a return from the corruptions of Eastern Christianity in the sixth century to

[97] Macleod, *Eastward*, pp. 66-67
[98] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 229

the simple religion from which it and Judaism had alike been developed, – the creed and worship of the Patriarchs'.[99]

Several travellers discussed prominent figures of Islamic history. While some presented Mohammad as a seventh-century Arab Martin Luther, others emphasised that he had no place in Christian doctrine. To John Wilson he was 'the Arabian impostor', to Thomas Jenner in *That Goodly Mountain & Lebanon*, 'the impostor of Mecca'.[100] Russell identified 'the wonderful prophet' Mohammad, as 'an ignorant, uneducated man, but still possessed of unquestionable power and great influence'; he both praised and slighted the Quran in Orientalist style, writing that it contained 'many passages of poetic beauty, religious fervour, and wise counsel; but it is at the same time full of the most utter rubbish and low sensuality'.[101] Eliot Warburton in *The Crescent and the Cross* complained that while 'the Koran is now eulogized by Europeans in terms that might make a Moslem jealous', Warburton himself 'having laboured through "its incoherent rhapsodies"', he could 'only marvel at the power of credulous fanaticism that could ever have distilled a faith, or even meaning, out of its fantastic pages'.[102]

Receiving largely positive representation was 'Omar ibn al-Khattab, the Arab Muslim leader who captured Jerusalem in 637. While 'Omar ended Christian rule in Palestine, perhaps because he triumphed over the "Eastern Christianity" many Protestant travellers praised him. Particularly enthusiastic was Marmaduke Pickthall (1875-1936) in his introduction to *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land*, written ten years before Pickthall's conversion to Islam in 1917. Simultaneously complimenting contemporary European colonialism, Pickthall asserted that, under 'Omar, 'the toleration displayed by the Moslems towards the vanquished, though less than we should practise nowadays, is without a parallel in Europe till many centuries later'.[103] Also frequently praised was the eighth-century Caliph Harun al-Rashid; Burton claimed that his 'every action appears to have been that of a well-bred gentleman'.[104] This celebration of historic Muslim figures created the impression of a "golden age" of Islam, when the

[99] Charles Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem: Impressions of the Work of England in and for the Holy City* (Oxford and London: Mowbray and Co., 1896), p. 65
[100] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 269; Thomas Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain & Lebanon* (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1873), p. 167
[101] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, p. 150
[102] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 62
[103] Marmaduke Pickthall, "Introduction" in J.E. Hanauer, *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1907), xi-xix, pp. xiv-xv
[104] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 68

Islamic Orient had made significant contributions to culture and science – in the words of Conder (commenting upon Umayyad-era ruins in Amman), when 'Islam was really great, and the Arab race really civilized' – followed by centuries of degeneration and stagnation, which characterised the Orient of the present.[105]

'Omar, Harun, and the anti-Crusader leader Saladin, discussed in Chapter Eight, formed models for "enlightened" imperialism for Western travellers. However, Turkish dynasties, including the Ottomans, were held as negative examples of empire. Kelman claimed that when Islam 'was Arabian, as it remained for four centuries, it was very tolerant', but after Turkish dynasties began to gain power in the eleventh century, 'the days of suspicion and that heavy cruelty which is characteristic of the stupid began'.[106] A rare note of praise came from Dixon, who argued that Eastern Mediterranean society required Ottoman control:

> Except among the Turks, there is no true toleration in the East; neither among the Arabs, nor the Greeks [Orthodox Christians], nor the Jews; nothing but a deceptive truce in the midst of a cruel war. The Turk is tolerant, and he is consequently supreme; a necessity, like the Saxon in Calcutta, the Gaul in Algiers, to all these inferior and more fanatical races of men.[107]

Beyond travellers' admiration for aspects of Islamic religion, historical figures, or system of government, however, was their attraction to Islam's holiest site in Palestine, the Haram al-Sharif.

[105] Claude Reignier Conder, *Heth and Moab. Explorations in Syria in 1881 and 1882* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1885), p. 166
[106] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 164
[107] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 394

## III.II: 'An Air of Paradise': Traveller-Writers in the Haram al-Sharif

**Figure 4.3:**
**"Enclosure of the Temple, Jerusalem",**
***Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* by W.H. Bartlett,**
**facing page 143**

The Haram al-Sharif (fig. 4.3) was a reminder of the Holy Land's possession by Islam, and, to Western travellers, of the destruction of the ancient Israelite temples which once occupied the site. Herschell lamented 'it is painful to the child of God to behold the mosque of the false prophet stand where the Temple once stood'; similarly, Agnes Smith wrote 'the abomination of desolation, the symbol of the destroying Turkish power, stands now where stood the glorious Temple'; 'the high home of God has become a chief tabernacle of the false prophet', H. Rider Haggard complained in almost identical terms in *A Winter Pilgrimage*.[108] Russell exclaimed that, should David or Solomon see where their temples once stood, 'desecrated with Mohammedan

[108] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 142; Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 252-253; H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 271

worship and superstition, what feelings of sorrow and indignation would take possession of their souls!'[109]

**Figure 4.4:**
**"Kubbet es Sakhra from the South",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, frontispiece**

Yet many travellers also showed an appreciation for the site's architecture and spiritual atmosphere. The Dome of the Rock was repeatedly represented verbally and visually (fig. 4.4). To Arthur Penrhyn Stanley in his *Sinai and Palestine*, the Dome was reminiscent of the glories of the ancient Jerusalem of travellers' imaginations, being the 'one exception' to the difficulty in contemporary Jerusalem to imagining 'the

[109] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, p. 24

magnificent sight […] in the times both of the Davidic and the Herodian monarchy'.[110] Treves agreed that it was not only 'without doubt the most beautiful building in Jerusalem', but also 'one of the most exquisite buildings in the world'.[111]

Before the mid-nineteenth century, it was difficult for non-Muslim Western visitors to gain access to the Haram. As Porter recounted,

> During my first visit to Jerusalem, the Temple area was sternly closed against *Kafers* – that is, non-Muslems of every sect and country. For Christian or Jew to enter was almost certain death. I tried to peep in through the open gates, but was rudely, even savagely, driven back by dervishes.[112]

Penetrating the private, sacred space with 'an air of paradise […] over its beautiful area, with its groves and fountains, never profaned by the foot of the unbeliever', in the words of Bartlett, became a highly valued prize.[113] In 1833, English architect Frederick Catherwood (1799-1854) entered the Haram in disguise, praising the Dome's 'most beautiful stained glass imaginable, perhaps of greater brilliancy than the finest specimens in our own cathedrals', and its 'peculiarly elegant form'. A decade later, John Wilson wrote that, in anticipation of 'threats and vociferations, if not […] dangerous missiles, from the bigoted custodiers of the mosk', the Haram's guards, his group could only go 'to the very margin of the tabooed territory, and exercised our visual organs with as much intenseness as circumstances could permit'.[114]

Following the Haram's opening first to privileged visitors such as European aristocrats and Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), the Anglo-Jewish philanthropist who helped lay the foundations for later Zionist settler colonial endeavours in Palestine, after the Crimean War entrance to the Haram was extended to Western travellers for an entrance fee.[115] Henry Baker Tristram wrote in his *The Land of Israel* that the Dome was

> time-worn, but well preserved, without, gorgeous, and almost dazzling, within; exquisite in its proportions, beautiful in its mosaics; all its decorations, lavish though they are, blend in wonderful harmony,

[110] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), pp. 182-183
[111] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 90
[112] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 44
[113] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, p. 145
[114] John Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. 477-478, 414
[115] See Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 421-422

> sparkling with glass of every tint, which casts a rainbow hue of blended colours on every object around.

Tristram's entourage behaved disrespectfully by shooting at birds nesting around the Haram.[116] Nevertheless, the Dome's beauty challenged Western travellers' ideas about "dead Islam" or the inability of Orientals to make great art.

While Temple complained that 'the ornamentation, though elaborate and gorgeous, is somewhat gaudy and tawdry, without due arrangement of colour or regard to general effect', most travellers viewed the Dome as tasteful, particularly by comparison with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (travellers' views of which are discussed in the following chapter), some expressing thankfulness that temple site was in Muslim rather than Eastern Christian ownership.[117] The rock or *sakhra* appealed particularly to Western travellers, as a piece of the "natural" landscape of the Holy Land. 'This rugged mass of stone impressed me more than all the vaunted glories of the Noble Sanctuary', wrote Rider Haggard.[118] Travellers were thankful that the *sakhra* had been left largely untouched, by comparison with Christ's tomb, almost completely obliterated in the Church. 'Would that the Holy Sepulchre and other holy sites had been preserved with the same good taste, surrounded by riches the offerings of devotion, but left to nature', commented Burton.[119] Although there was no Christian tradition surrounding the *sakhra*, some travellers invested it with new importance, representing it as a Judeo-Christian, in addition to Muslim, holy site. Agnes Smith wrote she 'felt to be certain' that the *sakhra* was 'probably the spot where Abraham offered up Isaac'. While she also expressed gratitude 'that these hallowed spots are in the possession of the Moslems, who treat them with more real respect than do the priest-ridden Christians', this attitude marked the start of the site's contestation continuing until the present, pitting Palestinians against Israeli settlers supported by Evangelical Christian Zionists wishing to see a third Jewish temple.[120]

While Muslims related to the Haram as an Islamic holy site, Western Evangelicals saw it as occupying the space of the ancient Jewish temples. Standing

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[116] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), pp. 178, 184-185

[117] Temple, *Palestine Illustrated*, p. 37

[118] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 273

[119] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 86

[120] Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims*, p. 282. For the more recent struggle over the Haram, see Nazmi Jubeh, "Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif: Crucible of Conflict and Control", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Winter 2016), 23-37

within the compound, many travellers' appreciation of the existing surroundings took second place to mental images of the temples. Equating the Israelites' religion with contemporary Protestantism, Macleod wrote

> Standing here one loves to linger on earlier days and to recall the holy men and women, the kings, priests, and prophets, who came up to this spot to pray — whose faith is our own, whose sayings are our guide, whose life is our example, and whose songs are our hymns of worship. We seem to hear the majestic psalms of David which have ascended from this spot […][121]

Smith reported similar thoughts occurring to her and her companions by the Haram at the time of the Islamic Nabi Musa pilgrimage, which began with Muslims gathering in the Haram:

> We could not help feeling deeply as we thought what a different procession once came up that steep path to the identical spot in the Haram enclosure at the time it was first consecrated. What different music — what a different refrain then resounded from the green sides of Olivet! "Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sins of Thy people, of Thy people Israel."[122]

While travellers agreed that the Haram included the site of the temples, the exact positioning of the temples was a subject of debate. Edward Robinson (1794-1863), the American Biblical archaeologist, and missionary Eli Smith (1801-1857), began their efforts to locate the temple site in 1838. Unable to enter the Haram, the deductions in his *Biblical Researches in Palestine* were conjecture. Robinson asserted that if 'we turn our eyes upon the present similar area of the grand mosk of Omar [the Dome in the common, mistaken, Western nomenclature], it would seem to be hardly a matter of question, that the latter occupies in part or in whole the same general location' as the second temple, according to the first-century Jewish chronicler Josephus. When 'Omar conquered the city, Robinson wrote, 'the Khalif determined to erect a mosk upon the site of the ancient Jewish temple'.

Regarding the al-Aqsa Mosque also in the Haram, Robinson incorrectly believed it had originally been the sixth-century Byzantine Church of Saint Mary, repurposed after the Arab conquest. 'This mosk [al-Aqsa] is universally regarded by

[121] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 148
[122] Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims*, p. 252

oriental Christians, and also by the Frank Catholics, as an ancient Christian church, once dedicated to the Virgin', Robinson wrote, without citing evidence for the belief of 'oriental Christians'.[123] Robinson's theory of al-Aqsa's origins was significant, removing the authorship of the building from Arabs and Muslims, and attributing it to a Christian European empire; the alleged repurposing of a church into the mosque framed Islam as a usurper in a previously Christian space. Eagerly accepting these claims, many travellers subscribed to Robinson's arguments. John Wilson, for instance, agreed that 'there can be but one opinion that the Mosk el-Aksa is the church of Justinian'.[124]

A Scottish architect, James Fergusson (1808-1886), developed a different theory in his pamphlet *An Essay on the Ancient Topography of Jerusalem*. Combining travellers' denial of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the conjectures on the Haram, Fergusson (who at this time had never visited Palestine) claimed that the Dome marked the site of Christ's tomb, and was itself the original fourth century Church of the Holy Sepulchre.[125] Fergusson admitted this was 'at first sight, so manifestly absurd and improbable, that many will, no doubt, on the simple announcement of such an hypothesis, throw down the book at once', but nevertheless attempted to prove his theories through Biblical quotations.[126] In his 1878 *The Temples of the Jews*, Fergusson revealed the racism behind his argument – only European Christians could have the beautiful Dome of the Rock, while al-Aqsa, accepted by Fergusson as of Arab Muslim origin, was far inferior:

> Everything in the Dome is elegant and well-proportioned, and everything suitable to the place where it is found. I do not indeed know of any tomb or tomblike building in the whole world so beautiful, or so entirely satisfactory, as the Dome of the Rock […]. The Aksa, on the other hand,

[123] Edward Robinson and Eli Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, and in the Adjacent Regions. A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1856), Volume 1, pp. 283, 298, 297. The Church of Saint Mary had, in fact, been destroyed by the Persian invasion in the early seventh century, before the arrival of Islam. The remains of Justinian's church were discovered under the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, extending outside its walls, in 1973 – not overlapping at all with the Haram area. Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem: The Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2011), pp. 193, 196

[124] Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 470

[125] Sarah Kochav writes 'Fergusson himself never visited Jerusalem', though this is contradicted by Macleod, who wrote that Fergusson 'lately visited Jerusalem to test [his theory's] accuracy still further by an actual inspection of the spot, and has returned more convinced, if possible, than ever'. Sarah Kochav, "The Search for a Protestant Holy Sepulchre: The Garden Tomb in Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (April 1995), 278-301, p. 285; Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 155

[126] James Fergusson, *An Essay on the Ancient Topography of Jerusalem, with Restored Plans of the Temple, &c., and Plans, Sections, and Details of the Church Built by Constantine the Great Over the Holy Sepulchre, Now Known as the Mosque of Omar* (London: John Weale, 1847), p. 76

> is badly designed, worse proportioned, and its details detestable. It betrays in every feature the efforts of a rude unskilful people, attempting to imitate the work of a superior race, which they were incapable either of understanding or appreciating.[127]

Fergusson's publications achieved only low circulation.[128] Nevertheless, they exerted some influence; Warren bitterly complained in his *The Temple or the Tomb*, a 200-page polemic against Fergusson, that Fergusson's 'chimerical and illusory' theories were 'being industriously scattered over the land in atlases, in Biblical dictionaries, and in architectural text-books'. While heaping scorn on the suggestion that the Dome had originally been a church, Warren agreed with Fergusson insofar as he suggested that the building was 'wrought by Christian architects' albeit working for the eighth-century Muslim Caliph 'Abd al-Malik; Warren's Palestine Exploration Fund colleague Charles Wilson concurred in *Picturesque Palestine*, claiming that 'the essentially Byzantine character of the building is explained by the supposition that Abd el Melik employed a Greek architect, the Arabs at that time having no style of their own'.[129] This theory, like Fergusson's, still removed the building from Arab authorship.

The effect of these beliefs concerning the Haram was to make Evangelicals feel the space was part of their own spiritual heritage in Palestine, despite the site's Islamic custodianship, its Islamic structures, and everyday use by Muslims. In April 1856, a party of Western Protestants entered the Haram to pray there, the incident being described by Finn who led the group after receiving permission from the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem in the wake of Britain's aid to the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War. Whilst the travellers 'scattered over the immense area and the beautiful green grass at their own pleasure', Finn recorded, 'the Moslems stood gravely aside, or sat and talked with each other, and noted the decorous reverence with which these Christians passed from point to point, and began to understand that to us, too, it is indeed holy ground – the noble Sanctuary'. He added that 'a very few of the English visitors had agreed beforehand to assemble in silent prayer around the Great Rock', and claimed solemnly that 'the day seemed to mark an epoch in the history of

[127] James Fergusson, *The Temples of the Jews and the Other Buildings in the Haram Area at Jerusalem* (London: John Murray, 1878), pp. 208-209
[128] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 99
[129] Charles Warren, *The Temple or the Tomb* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880), pp. ix, xi, xv; Wilson, "Jerusalem", p. 64

Jerusalem'.[130] To Finn and these Evangelicals, their entry into the Haram signified Protestant Christianity's penetration into the heart of Muslim Palestine, and the West's imperial ascendancy in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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Representations of Muslims and Islam were defined by an attitude relegating the Orient to a position in every way inferior to the Occident. The unique place of the Holy Land within the wider Islamic world led traveller-writers to adhere to specific beliefs on the Palestinian *fellahin*, such as an ancestral Canaanite identity which defined them rather than Islam; nevertheless, these arguments were used to denigrate Palestinians, as statements about Islam did for Muslims in other regions. Wilfully misunderstanding the indigenous society, some travellers viewed Palestinians as the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' of a future colonial or settler colonial enterprise. When travellers did write on Islam, and its holiest site in Palestine the Haram, while some expressed admiration for certain aspects, the general picture was one of wrongful usurpation into a Judeo-Christian space. Yet travellers' views of the Christianity in Palestine were often scarcely better, as the next chapter explores.

[130] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 422-423

## CHAPTER FIVE

## 'At Present a Disagreeable People': The Representation of Christians and Christianity

Christians formed Palestine's largest religious minority in the late Ottoman era, over ten per cent of the population at the turn of the twentieth century.[1] Evangelical Christian travellers, with a Bible-centric view of Palestine, and often strongly prejudiced against Islam, might be expected to have viewed Palestinian Christians with sympathy. However, some of travelogues' most stringent passages travelogues were reserved for Christians, Christian sites and forms of Christianity in Palestine. Wherever indigenous Christian practices departed from Evangelical expectations, Palestinians Christians came under attack. Such denunciations nevertheless sat alongside more positive representations, revealing how travellers' attitudes towards indigenous Christianity fed into their beliefs about Palestine, and Britain's attitude towards Christians during the Mandate era.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first addresses the representation of Christians in Palestine, from the dragomans who led travellers on their journeys, to the communities of indigenous Christians, to the monks who formed an important part of Christianity's fabric in Palestine. The second identifies the politicised dimensions of the representation of Christian communities, alternately portrayed as threats or pretexts for colonial interventions. The final section, reviewing travellers' responses to non-Western varieties of Christianity in Palestine, is divided into two, the first analysing attitudes towards Palestinian Christian faith practices, the second focusing upon travellers' views of Christianity's most sacred site, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Protestants' efforts to identify an alternative.

[1] Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2011), p. 12

## I: 'In a Class Apart': Representing Christians in Palestine

Journeying between Christian sites in towns and villages with part-Christian populations, travellers became well acquainted with the Christian *fellahin* and town dwellers. Westerners often travelled with dragomans (from Arabic *turjaman*, translator), frequently Christians from the Eastern Mediterranean. In *Palestine Illustrated*, Richard Temple noted that his dragomans were a Jerusalemite Orthodox Christian and a Catholic from Lebanon.[2] In *The Land of Israel*, Henry Baker Tristram's party included several Christian servants, including one from as far as Diabekir in the southeast of modern Turkey, and a 'Syrian-Greek' named Giacomo, represented as a good dragoman whose 'nation would be in better repute', 'if all Greeks were like him'.[3]

Christian Palestinian dragomans were frequently assigned the role of mediating between Westerners and Palestine. As noted by Rachel Mairs and Maya Muratov, 'the employment of a dragoman enabled a foreign visitor to insulate him- or her-self from the Orient in a way which offered an illusion of engaging with it'.[4] However, travellers often viewed their dragomans as untrustworthy: 'above all, keep the dragoman in his place', was Josias Leslie Porter's instruction to travellers in his *Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine*.[5] While acknowledging some dragomans were 'honest and well behaved', Ada Goodrich-Freer in *Inner Jerusalem* complained of 'others, especially among the younger ones', characterised by 'insolence, arrogance and ignorance', and hinted at Western women falling in love (or lust) with roguish specimens.[6] In *Patrollers of Palestine*, Haskett Smith – who as a British "dragoman" for Western tour groups was in competition with local guides – described the archetypal local dragoman as 'a self-educated Syrian, who had picked up a little smattering of English at one of the missionary schools, and who, therefore, thought himself perfectly qualified to become a personal conductor of English-speaking tourists

[2] Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1888), p. 76
[3] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), p. 83
[4] Rachel Mairs and Maya Muratov, *Archaeologists, Tourists, Interpreters: Exploring Egypt and the Near East in the Late 19th–Early 20th Centuries* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), p. 1
[5] Josias Leslie Porter, *A Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine; Including an Account of the Geography, History, Antiquities, and Inhabitants of these Countries, the Peninsula of Sinai, Edom, and the Syrian Desert; with Detailed Descriptions of Jerusalem, Petra, Damascus, and Palmyra.* (London: John Murray, 1868 [1858]), Volume 1, p. xlv
[6] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), pp. 216-217, 218

through the country'. Learning spiel 'like a parrot', these ill-informed guides knew little off 'the beaten track of the ordinary tourist'.[7]

The image of the "bad dragoman" was exemplified in two works, both authors noting the Christian faith of the accused. In his *Underground Jerusalem*, Charles Warren recounted his feud with the dragoman of the British Consulate in Jerusalem, Jacob, 'a sallow-faced rayah [Arabic/Ottoman Turkish: non-Muslim Ottoman subjects], of the Greek Church, who evidently thought he should be able to outwit me'. Warren's antipathy to Jacob rested on the claim that the 'swindling' Jacob had grossly overcharged Warren for items the dragoman had purchased for him in Jerusalem, and pocketed the difference; further accusations included that Jacob demanded *bakshish* from British-protected Jews to access the Consulate, incited the *fellahin* who worked on Warren's archaeological excavations to demand higher wages, and charged 'ten shillings to English travellers, while Americans only paid one dollar' for consular passes required for Westerners to visit the Haram al-Sharif compound. Warren attributed disrespectful behaviour to the dragoman, such as appearing during his trial 'at the open window clapping his hands, endeavouring to distract [the] attention' of the witnesses against him, and 'smoking a cigarette' during a meeting with Warren, who finally succeeded in getting Jacob sacked.[8]

The second example is from Laurence Oliphant's *The Land of Gilead*. To guide him from Salt east of the Jordan to Jerusalem, Oliphant engaged an 'extremely captivating and intelligent' guide named Elias Daoud, a Catholic from the Christian village of Jifna north of Jerusalem, who according to himself had 'peddled sacred relics through Russia' and 'accompanied the British expedition to Abyssinia', though Oliphant painted him as a habitual liar. Oliphant accused Daoud of (unsuccessfully) conspiring with a Bedouin tribe to rob him; Daoud eventually abandoned Oliphant near Bethany, in the process purloining Oliphant's pistol. 'He was the most plausible and fascinating of scoundrels,' Oliphant wrote, 'and possessing, besides, the great qualification of being a Christian, may yet hope to rise, under the enlightened protection of foreign Powers, to a position of affluence and dignity in the country'.[9] Oliphant's portrait of Daoud combined positive and negative traits, intelligence

[7] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 55
[8] Charles Warren, *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained.* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1876), pp. 288-297
[9] Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), pp. 281-282 305-313

alongside cunning; while these qualities might benefit the Christian community in the event of Palestine's occupation by a Western power, they also might make them troublesome subjects, explored further below.

As guides, local Christians posed another problem. Most British travellers were Evangelical Protestants; as explored throughout this thesis, particularly in Chapter Eight, they saw Palestine through Evangelical eyes. Francis Wegg-Prosser (1824-1911), a leading Victorian Catholic, complained in an article that among travellers to Palestine, 'there were Anglican clergymen; there were Methodist missionaries; there were the inevitable American tourists; also a few Catholics from the Continent […] from England none'.[10] Local non-Protestant Christian dragomans sometimes had difficulty second-guessing how to guide Western travellers, who shared the name of their faith but not their interest in traditional holy sites. In *The Lands of the Bible*, John Wilson complained that, compared to Muslim and Jewish guides in Jerusalem, 'our Christian guides cared most for what we least valued, the monkish traditions, which our own reading had previously almost uniformly taught us to discard'.[11] Tristram recorded his dragoman Giacomo's confusion over Tristram's enthusiasm for the village of Beitin, which featured in the Bible but was unmarked by physical Christian shrines. 'No holy places here, and no pilgrims ever visit them', Tristram reported Giacomo's words. 'I have been dragoman to scores of Russians and Frenchmen, but it is only you English who come here. Perhaps you only care for places where there are no saints, as you do not adore them?' Tristram explained Giacomo's lack of comprehension by stating 'there were no saints of the calendar here, and beyond them his veneration could not stretch'.[12] For this reason, and the others discussed above, Agnes Smith repeated in her *Eastern Pilgrims* the advice of a Muslim dragoman in Cairo, 'whatever you do, when you go to Syria, don't take a Christian' as a dragoman.[13]

Christian rural and urban communities in Palestine were also represented by travellers in their texts. Christian villagers were often presented as particularly enterprising compared to their Muslim neighbours. Despite the multitudinous faults Westerners identified in Palestinian Christianity, they often used the apparent

[10] F.R. Wegg-Prosser, "Facilities of Modern Pilgrimage", *The Dublin Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (October 1886), 295-313, p. 297
[11] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (Edinburgh: William White & Co., 1847), Volume 1, p. 407
[12] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 164-165
[13] Agnes Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims: The Travels of Three Ladies* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870), p. 193

prosperity of Christian towns and villages to indicate Christianity's superiority over Islam. 'The Fellaheen who belong to the Greek Church […] are in many ways superior to the Mohammedan villagers', James Neil wrote in *Everyday Life in the Holy Land*, 'and if their Christianity is little more than a profession it has raised them to a higher position of respectability and […] a class apart' from Muslims.[14] Bearing little love for the religious practices of Palestinian Christians, many travellers could not resist turning them into a spiritual parable of Christianity versus Islam.

Towns and villages with Christian populations were usually portrayed as civilised, clean and orderly. Tristram claimed of Ramallah that 'Christianity had here, as elsewhere, stamped the place and its substantial houses with a neatness and cleanliness to which the best of Moslem villages are strangers'.[15] In *The Cradle of Christianity*, David Morison Ross wrote that 'the modern Kefr Kenna is a clean and thriving village, with many Christian inhabitants'. Combining travellers' beliefs in Christians' entrepreneurialism and their propagation of doubtful holy sites, Ross noted a stone jar in a church where Christ was claimed to have turned water into wine in the Galilean village, and commented that 'the inhabitants of Palestine have discovered that it "pays" to have sacred places or sacred relics in their town or village'.[16] This was certainly true of Bethlehem, as several travellers recognised the leading role of enterprising Christians in the town's tourist trade. To some travellers, this was a disruption of the town's sacred associations. Haskett Smith complained of the 'shower' of business cards of 'Salim Khouri, or Hanna Massad, or Ibrahim Antoun, or some such vendor of Oriental curiosities' forced upon Western visitors, and announced that 'of all places in the world, Bethlehem takes the palm for importunate sellers of spurious relics and trashy articles of so-called sacred interest'.[17] Yet while Muslim communities in Palestine were often portrayed as stuck in the remote past, some Christians were seen as embracing the progressive spirit of capitalism. Recognition of this lay behind Arthur Copping's positive evaluation in his *A Journalist in the Holy Land*, as he approvingly commented that 'as was easy to see, modern Bethlehem is awake to commercial opportunities presented by a constant stream of tourists and pilgrims'. Copping acknowledged that 'this traffic in religious toys might well prove discordant

[14] James Neil, *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* (London: Cassell and Company, 1913), p. 111
[15] Tristam, *Land of Israel*, p. 506
[16] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), p. 118
[17] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 225

with the spirit in which one visits Bethlehem', but this, he claimed, was offset by the 'personal demeanour' and 'grace and decorum' of the Christian traders, particularly the 'smiling alertness and an engaging maidenly dignity' of the 'girls', whose sales techniques lacked 'any taint of whining importunity'.[18]

Christians were sometimes presented as better farmers than the Muslim *fellahin*. This touched on the key issue of Palestine's fertility and the general state of the land, discussed at length below in Chapter Eleven. An apparently greater productivity in Christian-populated areas was claimed by travellers to bolster the argument that Palestine's "desolation" was due to Muslims alone, again presenting in a favourable light Christianity's work ethic as against Islam's. Bethlehem was often noted for its surrounding cultivation: in *Picturesque Palestine*, Tristram claimed 'all bespeaks a care and cultivation uncommon in Palestine, for the inhabitants of the little town above are Christians, and till the soil with perseverance and patience unknown to their Moslem neighbours'.[19] In the same volume, Claude Reignier Conder explained the perceived difference between Christian- and Muslim-farmed regions was 'partly because the Christians can claim protection from foreign powers, which the Moslems do not enjoy', but also 'the helpless fatalism and indolent resignation of the Moslems, contrasted with the energy and enterprise of the villagers educated by the Greek and Latin priests'.[20] Porter represented Bethlehem's Christian cultivators in glowing terms in his *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*:

> The men of Bethlehem are strong, industrious, and brave. They cultivate their fields and vineyards and olive-groves with care and success. The women are fairer in complexion and more graceful in carriage and manner than any others of the native population of southern Palestine. There may be among them some of the descendants of the Crusaders who, we are told, settled in the village.[21]

The appearance of Christians, particularly women, was commented upon by numerous travellers, and sometimes represented in illustrations. 'The women are remarkable for personal beauty', Samuel Manning wrote of Bethlehem in *"Those Holy*

[18] Arthur E. Copping, *A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), p. 232
[19] Henry Baker Tristram, "Bethlehem and the North of Judæa" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 1, 121-192, p. 123
[20] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Mountains of Judah and Ephraim" in Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 1, 193-238, p. 228
[21] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), p. 121

*Fields"*, adding that he 'saw more handsome faces here in a few hours than elsewhere in the East in many days'.[22]

Claiming a particular appearance of Christian women asserted Christian superiority over Islam even in looks, ethnically segregated Christian from Muslim Palestinians, and created an idealised image of pure and natural femininity in the Holy Land (fig. 5.1). While some Oriental cities, like Cairo and Damascus with their *Arabian Nights* allure, were transformed in European imagination into, as Rana Kabbani writes, 'a sexual space […] an escape from the dictates of the bourgeois morality of the metropolis', such connotations were inappropriate for the scenery of the Bible. Christian women could be fetishized in a semi-erotic yet sanitised way, especially by male travellers, still 'offer[ing] a prototype of the sexual in a repressive age, and […] coveted as the permissible expression of a taboo topic'.[23] Over several pages in *Eothen*, Alexander Kinglake expressed relief upon entering Christian Bethlehem after experiencing 'the sad decorum of the Mussulmans, or rather of the Asiatics' during his preceding travels, and his pleasure upon hearing 'the voice of free, innocent girls'. After describing a perhaps imagined encounter with some 'romping girls of Bethlehem' who coquettishly competed to grab his hand, Kinglake designated their town a 'gushing spring of fresh, and joyous girlhood'.[24]

[22] Samuel Manning, *"Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 42
[23] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule* (London: Pandora Press, 1988), pp. 67, 7
[24] Alexander William Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), pp. 235-239


**Figure 5.1:**
**"Seller of Bracelets in Court of Church of the Holy Sepulchre",**
***Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**page 57**

Kinglake's association of 'Mussulmans' with 'Asiatics' was also significant, belittling Christians' position in the Orient, and denying Palestinian Christians' indigeneity to Palestine. This was part of a larger discourse: the supposedly superior appearance of Christians was also used to hypothesise European ancestry through the Crusaders, as displayed by Porter. Evidencing travellers' Eurocentrism, beauty was frequently associated with whiteness. Tristram wrote of the 'fair and European-like' beauty of Bethlehemite Christians, explaining that 'Bethlehem is a Christian town, and doubtless owes the beauty of its inhabitants to the Norman blood of the Crusaders' colony'.[25] The theory was not limited to Bethlehem: Conder wrote in *Tent Work in Palestine* that 'various reasons are given' for the appearance of Nazareth's women, 'which agree, however, in supposing a mixture of European blood'.[26] Oliphant also hinted at Western origins for Christians. In *The Land of Gilead*, he described Christian women from 'Ajlun east of the Jordan as 'beautiful girls', with 'faces […] of the purest Grecian type'; in his *Haifa* he praised a Christian woman from 'Akka as 'one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen, quite Caucasian in type and complexion, which is white and transparent as that of any Western beauty'.[27]

Many Western visitors agreed with Conder's assertion that Christians 'present a far more pleasing and picturesque appearance than most of the inhabitants of Syrian towns'. However, coupled with allegations of their foreign ancestry, the emphasis on Christians' difference served to discursively divide them from their Muslim neighbours, negating the possibility of a shared nationality. Travellers' admiration could warp into sneering dismissals of, in Conder's words, 'the degraded sects of Eastern Christians of mixed nationality', possibly reflecting fears of miscegenation.[28] Linked to West rather than East, yet spurned for their traditions as discussed below, Palestinian Christians were represented as "neither here nor there". This was mirrored in British attitudes towards Christians during the Mandate: viewing Christians as not as authentically Palestinian as Muslims, Mandate authorities excluded Christians from the body they created in 1922 to represent Palestinians' concerns, the Supreme Muslim Council, despite (or perhaps because of) Christians' leading role in the Palestinian national movement. As Laura Robson writes, there was 'a general

[25] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 403
[26] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), p. 74
[27] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, p. 167; Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), p. 85
[28] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 74-75, 387

unwillingness to acknowledge the existence of the Arab Christian communities, in marked contrast to the encouragement of communal expression among Palestinian Muslims'.[29]

Travellers encountered another category of Christians who were an integral part of Palestinian Christianity: monks resident in the Holy Land's many monastic institutions. Dotted around Palestine, monasteries were sometimes points of interest in their own right to travellers, and served as accommodation for those weary of "tent life", before hotels became common. 'A clean bed was no small luxury, though with sheets of penitentiary coarseness', admitted William Henry Bartlett in his *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* of the Latin Convent, a favourite lodging-place of travellers in Jerusalem; Temple expressed his gratitude for 'monasteries, Latin or Greek […] where a hospitable welcome is given'; and John Kelman in *The Holy Land* recorded that 'on the top of Tabor, at Tell Hum on the Sea of Galilee, and in other places, we were received and entertained with the most cordial and generous hospitality' in the 'clean and spacious guest-chambers' of monasteries, 'open to all comers'.[30]

However, many travellers did not feel at ease within these spaces, confronted with non-Protestant aesthetics, beliefs and traditions. William Thackeray in his *Notes of a Journey* described the Cathedral of Saint James, adjoining Jerusalem's Armenian Convent (another common lodging for travellers), as 'ornamented by the most rich and hideous gifts ever devised by uncouth piety'.[31] Evangelical Protestants critiqued the monks for not actively proselytising among the Eastern Mediterranean's residents. In his *Sinai and Palestine*, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley described Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai as 'a colony of Christian pastors planted among heathens', but despaired that 'hardly a spark of civilisation or of Christianity […] has been imparted to a single tribe or family in that wide wilderness'.[32] Ross similarly bemoaned that 'there are hundreds of Greek monks in Palestine, but they do nothing for the extension

[29] Laura Robson, "Becoming a Sectarian Minority: Arab Christians in Twentieth-Century Palestine" in Laura Robson (ed.), *Minorities and the Modern Arab World: New Perspectives* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2016), 61-76, p. 70

[30] William Henry Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1844), pp. 14-15; Temple, *Palestine Illustrated*, p. 8; John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 148

[31] William Makepeace Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), pp. 223

[32] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), p. 55

of Christianity', and claimed that 'few even of the ecclesiastical dignitaries – sent to Palestine from Constantinople – are acquainted with the Arabic language'.[33] In line with the West's missionary enterprise, travellers could not envisage a role for Christianity in Palestine other than the attempt to convert as much of the population as possible.

The most maligned site was the Orthodox monastery of Mar Saba, frequently visited by travellers between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, often noted for its antiquity and picturesqueness (fig. 5.2). These notwithstanding, traveller-writers competed to paint the most aggressively abject picture of Mar Saba and its resident monks possible. Tristram claimed the monks seemed 'profoundly ignorant' on religious matters; Conder proclaimed that 'the Greek monk is perhaps the most degraded representative of Christianity, and they [the monks of Mar Saba] were the worst of their kind'; Kelman claimed that 'everywhere dirt reigned supreme unspeakable filth in open drains and putrid litter' throughout the monastery, which was 'a sort of combination of prison and asylum, where lunatics are kept under the charge of monks condemned to this place for heresy or immorality'; and Frederick Treves wrote in his *The Land That Is Desolate* that Mar Saba was 'a diseased product of religion' and 'probably the most ridiculously placed building in the world, as well as the most useless'.[34]

[33] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 236
[34] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 265; Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 157-158; Kelman, *Holy Land*, p. 148; Frederick Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1912), p. 136

**Figure 5.2:**
**"Mar Saba, Valley of the Kedron",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, facing page 148**

The monks of a variety of sects who presided over the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were also subject to textual attack. With a flavour of the anti-monastic sentiment engrained in British Protestantism since the Reformation, Thackeray accused the monks he saw of bearing 'every sign of easy conscience and good living' and presenting an image of 'anything but asceticism'.[35] Travellers also accused the monks of different sects of perpetuating divisions within Christianity and bringing shame upon the faith, often expressed at travellers' entry into the Church, where Muslim Ottoman soldiers were stationed to keep order between rival sects. Traveller after traveller professed to feel shock upon encountering these 'picturesque, agile fellows, lolling on a mat, throwing off curls of smoke, and listening to tales of love and war', as William Hepworth Dixon wrote in *The Holy Land*. The presence of soldiers inside the Church, travellers claimed, offended their sense of piety, though many travellers had little reverence for the site themselves. Yet the real tragedy, Dixon argued, was that the soldiers' presence was only 'a minor evil', compared to what might happen in their absence.[36] 'Until the Turkish authorities intervened to keep the peace', claimed Haskett Smith, 'scarcely a day used to pass without some scenes of strife, quarrelling, and even bloodshed, occurring between the votaries of the different religions'. Smith piously despaired that 'the unity, peace, and concord which are among the first principles of the religion of Christ' were supposedly ignored by monks, indulging in violent sectarianism. This was responsible in Evangelicals' eyes for damaging the missionary effort, as Palestine's non-Christian inhabitants were thought to be disgusted by the absence of harmony among non-Protestant Christians. 'In scorn and derision the Moslems and the Jews exclaim: "See how these Christians hate one another!"', wrote Haskett Smith, while Ross similarly lamented that 'in such a guise does Christianity present itself to the Mohammedans of Jerusalem!'[37]

Some traveller-writers placed emphasis on disputes at the Holy Sepulchre to cast Palestinian Christianity in particularly poor light. Goodrich-Freer wrote a lengthy and sensationalist account of a confrontation (which she did not herself witness) between Orthodox and Franciscan monks in outside the Church November 1901. In an 'indescribable scene of carnage and bloodshed' the Orthodox monks, supported by Palestinian Christian women, attacked the Franciscans with 'clubs […] daggers,

[35] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, p. 200
[36] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), pp. 390-391
[37] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 150-151; Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 74

knives, and hatchets', and stones thrown from the Church windows, severely wounding fifteen Franciscans and a dragoman, and were about to set the wounded alight with 'burning rags, soaked in petroleum' when Ottoman troops intervened.[38] It is possible that Goodrich-Freer, or her Franciscan informants in Jerusalem, overstated the scale of this fracas: British news reports stated that four to five monks were injured.[39] Amplifying such incidents allowed travellers to present Christianity in Palestine as part and parcel with a barbarous Orient, giving reassurance to Evangelicals that non-Western Christians were fundamentally unlike them. 'The city of Jerusalem is supposed to contain about thirteen thousand "Christians"', wrote Goodrich-Freer in a damning verdict of both the monks and local Palestinian Christians. 'Not one solitary man came to the rescue'.[40]

Monks had some defenders. Charles Biggs stated in *Six Months in Jerusalem* that 'the more I saw of their various dignitaries the more foolish and misjudged seemed to be some common phrases by which the Orthodox Christians were described as being "sunk in darkness and superstition"'.[41] Bartlett admitted that there were 'individual instances of moral and spiritual excellence' among the monks. However, this was only an exception to the rule, and of the Jerusalem monks Bartlett claimed that 'the very sanctity of the spot inflames [the] evil principles' of 'grovelling and gainful superstition, and of mutual animosity and rivalry'.[42] This attitude reflected the disappointment of Evangelical Protestants that the presence in Jerusalem and other sacred spaces of the Orthodox, Catholic, and other non-Western Churches was much greater than Protestantism's own reach in Palestine. Ironically, as they castigated Palestine's monks for sectarianism, Westerners demonstrated their own Protestant sectarianism in their total disavowal of not only the ancient Christian monastic tradition, but also much of the practice of the faith by the indigenous Christians of Palestine.

[38] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, pp. 172-176
[39] Anonymous, "Summary of News", *The Sheffield Telegraph* (8 November 1901), p. 4
[40] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, pp. 175-176
[41] Charles Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem: Impressions of the Work of England in and for the Holy City* (Oxford and London: Mowbray and Co., 1896), pp. 241-242
[42] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 194-195

## II: 'At Present a Disagreeable People': Christians and Colonial Control

As discussed in the other chapters on the representation of Palestine's population, and in Chapter Eleven, Palestinians were very frequently evaluated by travellers in relation to the role they might play in the event of the area's colonisation by Britain, and/or the "return" of the Jews. Despite the unique associations of Palestinian Christians in the minds of Westerners, and the ties of faith which nominally bound them to Christians in the West, they were no exception to this colonial conceptualisation. Christians were articulated as both beneficiaries and threats to a Western occupation of Palestine, with important implications for British policies in the late Ottoman era and attitude towards Christians during the Mandate period.

Christians were viewed by some travellers as oppressed under Ottoman rule. 'Lounging' along a Damascus street, Kinglake reported being stopped by a Damascene Christian whose 'lips only whispered, and that tremulously, but his fiery eyes spoke out their triumph in long, and loud hurrahs! "I, too, am a Christian. My foes are the foes of the English. We are all one people, and Christ is our King"'. Kinglake 'liked this claim of brotherhood' between himself and Eastern Christians, despite 'all the warnings which I heard against their rascality'; he expressed his 'sympathy towards those who, with all the claims of superior intellect, learning, and industry, were kept down under the heel of the Mussulmans by reason of their having our faith'. Kinglake claimed to hear 'the faint echo of an old Crusader's conscience, that whispered, and said, "Common cause!"'[43] These sentiments drew upon anti-Turkish, pro-Christian public opinion in Britain throughout the nineteenth century. For instance in 1876, the designer and writer William Morris (1834-1896) wrote in the press to protest Britain's support to the Ottomans, 'a gang of thieves and murderers', oppressing the 'quite orderly and industrious' Christians in the Balkans; such language was identical to that in most Palestine travelogues.[44]

This contributed to a discourse, discussed in Chapter Eleven, of the Eastern Mediterranean's people desiring liberation from the Ottoman yoke through a British occupation. Christians were articulated as weak, helpless, and needing Western

[43] Kinglake, *Eothen*, pp. 389-391
[44] William Morris, "The Eastern Question" in *News From Nowhere and Other Writings* (London: Penguin Classics, 1993), 393-398, p. 395. On the 'Eastern Question crisis' of the 1870s and anti-Turkish public sentiment, see Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 204-205

protection. Rather than sympathy *à la* Kinglake, this could result in contempt. James Finn wrote in his *Stirring Times* of 'the poor trembling Christians', asserting that 'very few persons of their classes understand what we mean by either personal or moral courage'. His wife Elizabeth also commented on 'the timidity and slavish weakness' of Palestinian Christians.[45] Isabel Burton penned a scathing attack in *The Inner Life of Syria*, describing urban Christians as 'simply deplorable'; while the West was 'bound in the cause of humanity and religion to protect them', she claimed that 'when you look at them you hardly wonder that the Moslem treats them like Pariahs', describing Christians as 'morally as well as physically mean and *mesquin*'.[46]

The discourse of helpless Christians drew upon the politics of the Eastern Question. France and Russia assumed protection over Catholic and Orthodox Christians respectively, while Britain and France forced the *Tanzimat* reform process, guaranteeing equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, upon the Ottomans from 1839 to 1876.[47] The *Tanzimat*, as Ussama Makdisi has noted, identified Christians as different from Muslims, 'whether as objects of imperial concessions by an ostensibly benevolent sultan, or of concern and protection by European powers', possibly contributing to Christians' victimisation in outbreaks of intercommunal violence at Aleppo in 1850 and Damascus and Lebanon in 1860-1861, which facilitated Western intervention in the region.[48]

Large-scale anti-Christian violence was unknown in Palestine, but isolated incidents were nevertheless seized upon to present a case of oppressed Christians in the Holy Land requiring Western protection. The 1856 riot in Nablus, mentioned above and discussed more fully in Chapter Ten, provided the opportunity for several travellers to describe in bloodcurdling detail the attacks on the small number of Christians who were killed. A report also appeared in the press, claiming to be 'an almost verbatim transcription of a letter addressed by three of the most respectable Protestant Christians in Nablous', sent to John Bowen (1815-1859), an Anglican missionary recently returned to London from Palestine. The letter beseeched Western aid to Palestine's Christians in the face of oppression of Biblical proportions by the

[45] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 1, pp. 340, 476, 188
[46] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 1, p. 107
[47] Roderick H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 54, 63
[48] Ussama Makdisi, *The Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 54

Ottomans and local Muslims. 'Where are the English, where the French and the Sardianians, who have shed their blood to uphold the power of Islam, and to give liberty to the Christians of the East?' asked the letter, referring to Western support for Turkey during the Crimean War. 'They have spill [sic] their blood in vain. Their toil has gone in emptiness. Pharoah will not let Israel go'.[49] The letter's tone was similar to that of British travellers; its authenticity cannot be known, nor (if it was authentic) the accuracy of Bowen's 'almost verbatim' translation.

Simultaneously with the picture of vulnerable Christians requiring Western help, some traveller-writers asserted that, rather than being grateful beneficiaries of liberation from Ottoman rule, Christians might pose a threat to a British occupation of Palestine. Warren led this charge in *The Land of Promise*. While expecting no resistance from Muslims, Warren admitted that 'with the native Christians I see some difficulty – whether from being ground down for so many years, both by the [Ottoman] Government and by their neighbours, or from other causes, I know not. They are at present a disagreeable people'. Warren predicted that Christians' opposition would spring from their supposed intolerance of other sects and religions. 'No doubt', Warren argued, 'as far as the people are concerned, the greatest difficulty in the regeneration of Palestine will be in keeping the native Christians within due bounds and preventing them from injuring the harmony of the country by endeavouring to persecute other sects'. He hinted at the necessity of special methods of control for the Christian population, writing that 'the native Christians must be kept very tightly in hand at first'.[50]

Travellers' perception of a Christian threat also had a geopolitical dimension. While the 'respectable Protestant Christians in Nablous' wrote to the British press, there were very few Protestant Christians in Palestine who owed their allegiance to Britain, and many more non-Protestants who felt closer ties to Britain's imperial rivals. In Lebanon, as Ross pointed out, Maronite Catholics 'would be predisposed to back up any claims France might advance'; in Palestine, the problem lay more with Russia, the most serious rival to Britain in the Eastern Question. 'Russia is the Power to which the majority of the native Christians naturally look for protection, for she has the same form of Christianity as themselves', Ross asserted, referring to Palestinian Orthodox

[49] Anonymous, "The Outrages at Nablous", *The Daily News* (5 May 1856), p. 4
[50] Charles Warren, *The Land of Promise; or, Turkey's Guarantee* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1875), pp. 8, 23

Christians. 'In any conflict which might arise, Russia could count upon the sympathy of a large proportion of the townsfolk'.[51]

Russian influence was encountered at numerous points around Palestine, often to travellers' chagrin. Seeing the Romanovs' double-headed eagle in the Orthodox Convent in Jerusalem, Thackeray despaired that the 'butcher and tyrant' Tsar 'in the Eastern Church ranks after Divinity, and is worshipped by millions of men'.[52] Goodrich-Freer commented perceptively on the schools established by the Russian Orthodox Church in Palestine, 'over a hundred […] in Galilee alone'. Goodrich-Freer credited Russia with the understanding that 'in the intelligent, quick-witted Arab, properly trained, and under the right influence, she might find a powerful ally and propagandist', local Orthodox priests forming another bulwark of Russia's presence in Palestine.[53]

The construction of the Russian Compound over the second half of the nineteenth century west of Jerusalem, seemed to British travellers to be proof of Russia's imperial designs. To Tristram, the Compound was 'a sort of taking possession of the land by anticipation', while Burton described it as 'perhaps a Fort in disguise'.[54] Warren noted that the Compound was 'garrisoned by some hundreds, sometimes by thousands, of so-called pilgrims, who at Easter time almost occupy Palestine'.[55] The large number of Russian peasant pilgrims (fig. 5.3) were viewed by some travellers with affection, by others with contempt, and still others with pity.[56] To all, they represented a primitive form of Christianity, far removed from enlightened bourgeois Protestantism. Copping wrote that 'the discoveries of Conder, Warren, and the Palestine Exploration Society did not exist for those poor Russian peasants'.[57] As Warren himself hinted, some travellers viewed the pilgrims as another source of Russian threat, with Oliphant claiming that 'there is not a Russian pilgrim who visits Jerusalem who does not hope that he may live to see the day when it will become a Russian city'.[58]

[51] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 254
[52] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, p. 201
[53] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, pp. 84-85
[54] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 172; Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 221
[55] Warren, *Land of Promise*, p. 9
[56] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, p. 81; Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 353; Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 140
[57] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, pp. 222-223
[58] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 312

**Figure 5.3:**
**"Pilgrims of the Greek Church Buying Candles",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, page 22**

Times changed, although continuities continued regarding British perceptions of Palestine's Orthodox Christians. In *With the Russian Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, the journalist Stephen Graham (1884-1975) narrated his journey with a boatload of Russian pilgrims. After witnessing the exhortations of revolutionary socialists amongst the ship's crew, Graham complacently commented that 'the peasants were of too antique a type to be good ground for propagandism'.[59] The Russian Revolution of 1917, however, ended the pilgrimages from Russia, and radically altered whatever relationship Moscow might have with Palestine. During the Mandate era, some Orthodox Christians received education in the Soviet Union and became prominent

[59] Stephen Graham, *With the Russian Pilgrims to Jerusalem* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), p. 63

leaders in Palestine's communist movement.[60] Christians thus continued to be viewed by the British authorities with suspicion as possible agents of foreign powers, a continuation of an older travellers' discourse.

Another serious threat posed by Palestinian Christians in the eyes of British travellers was connected to travellers' proto-Zionist hopes. Multiple travellers asserted that Palestinian Christians were especially prejudiced against Jews. Influencing this belief was the Damascus Affair of 1840 in which fourteen members of Damascus's Jewish community were arrested on false charges, five dying of torture, after the disappearance of a Catholic monk.[61] Evangelical opinion in Britain was organised in the Jews' defence, leaving a lasting negative image of the non-Protestant Churches in the Ottoman Empire. Ridley Haim Herschell presented anti-Semitism as virtually an article of faith of the dominant Churches in Palestine in his *A Visit to My Father-Land*, claiming that Jews were 'persecuted both by the Greek and Romish churches'; in *Domestic Life in Palestine*, Mary Eliza Rogers wrote that 'the Oriental Christians are unhappily very bitter in their hatred of the Jews', and lamented that 'the Christianity of the East is not the world-embracing, harmonizing Christianity which Christ taught'.[62] With many travellers' deeply-held belief in the prophesied "return" of the Jews, and complex of philo-Semitic attitudes towards Jews as discussed in the next chapter, this posed a problem: John Wilson commented that 'the neglected Eastern Christians are, by their idolatries and superstitions, at present stumbling-blocks in the way of the Jews'.[63]

Travellers presented anecdotal evidence from Palestine which, they claimed, supported these allegations. Several travellers recorded hearing anti-Semitic chants in Arabic at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre's Easter ceremony, an occasion which, as seen below, travellers defamed in every way.[64] Burton reported a visit to the Western Wall to watch Jews at prayer; while accompanying Muslims 'remained respectfully serious', an Orthodox Christian girl Burton had "adopted" who 'had hardly

[60] Merav Mack, "Orthodox and Communist: A History of a Christian Community in Mandate Palestine and Israel", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (2015), 384-400; see also Robson, "Becoming a Sectarian Minority", p. 69
[61] Albert M. Hyamson, "The Damascus Affair – 1840", *Transactions (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 16 (1945-1951), 47-71
[62] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to My Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843]), p. 65; Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), pp. 359-360, 410
[63] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, pp. 446-447
[64] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 109; Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 177; Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 100

ever seen a Jew', according to Burton 'flung herself on the ground and laughed nearly into hysterics' upon seeing the Jews praying.[65] As shown in the next chapter, travellers associated the site with profound sentiments from Jewish history, and the reaction of the girl would have reflected very negatively on the readers' image of her community. In his *Days in Galilee*, Alexander Boddy recounted a conversation he had with a Protestant convert in Nazareth, whom he asked about the absence of Jewish populations there and in Bethlehem. He received the answer that 'the so-called Christians will not allow them to live in these towns, and *they* are so largely in the majority'.[66]

The claimed antipathy of some Christians to Jews was one of several black marks placed against the entirety of the indigenous non-Protestant Christian community in Palestine by traveller-writers. The same qualities which Kinglake extolled in favour of the Christians, their 'intellect, learning, and industry', could turn them into a threat to a British occupation and to Palestine's colonisation by Jewish settlers. Later British attempts to marginalise the community were underpinned by the views of travellers repeatedly stated over decades. Alongside these political considerations, religious attitudes contributed to travellers' ambiguous representation of Palestinian Christianity, as reviewed below.

[65] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, pp. 107-108
[66] Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 76

## III.I: 'The Depths of Ignorance and Childishness': Non-Western Christianity in Palestine

A gulf separated Evangelical Protestant British travellers from Christian Palestinians. The attacks on forms of Christianity different to the writer's own sometimes reached extreme proportions. Herschell dismissed Catholics as 'as complete worshippers of wood and stone as the heathen inhabitants of the South Sea Islands'. Eastern Churches he refused to 'reckon […] churches of Christ at all; they are heathenism, mixed up with certain Christian dogmas, that become completely neutralized by the mixture'. Palestinian Christian knew 'no more of [Christ] as a Saviour from sin […] than the Mohammedans around them'.[67] John Wilson accused Palestine's 'so-called Christian' community of 'ignorance, idolatry, and superstition'. Reporting a conversation on 'the idolatry of the eastern Christians' with Jewish Protestant converts in Jaffa, Wilson claimed 'they were pleased to find us cherish as great an abhorrence of it as themselves'.[68] Tristram wrote of the 'childish and ridiculous ceremonies' of Eastern Christianity, contrasting them with Islam which was 'simple and noble in idea and in form'; he indicted the Christianity in Palestine as 'the lowest and most corrupt form of Christianity'.[69]

Travellers unsurprisingly supported the efforts spearheaded by the Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem Samuel Gobat (1799-1879, Bishop 1846-1879) and the London-based Church Missionary Society to entice Palestinian Christians to Protestantism.[70] Finn explained

> On the whole subject of native Protestantism I am convinced that it has a good reflective effect upon the old Christian communities, and also in behalf [sic] of even these in the mind of the Moslem enemies, who will learn that Christianity is not necessarily a mere worship of images and pictures, but is consistent with good moral conduct before God and man.[71]

Some travellers made contact with indigenous missionaries who were converts to Protestantism. Oliphant and Boddy stayed at the homes of Nazareth-born Khalil Jamal

[67] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, pp. 11-12, 65-66, 160
[68] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, pp. 268, 258
[69] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 85
[70] Seth J. Frantzman, Benjamin W. Glueckstadt and Ruth Kark, "The Anglican Church in Palestine and Israel: Colonialism, Arabization and Land Ownership", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (January 2011), 101-126, p. 103
[71] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, pp. 153-154

(1840-1907) in Salt and Nazareth respectively, while John Mills in his *Three Months' Residence at Nablus* recounted his time with his 'Arab friend' Yohannah al-Karey (1843/1844-1907) from Nablus, whom Mills funded to study at Protestant seminaries in Britain, and later guided Thomas Jenner on his travels recounted in *That Goodly Mountain and Lebanon.*[72] Travellers' positive representations of local missionaries threw the claimed excesses of non-Protestant Christians into even worse light. Some travellers, whether or not on official missionary business in Palestine, wished to contribute to the missionary effort, such as Jenner who took with him 'a portmanteau, containing twelve Arabic copies of each of the Gospels' to distribute among potential converts.[73] Others praised Protestantism's transformative effect which, they alleged, was eroding Christians' prior religious deficiencies. Josias Leslie Porter in his *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* asserted that, in Nazareth, 'Protestant teachers and schools are doing a good work among the young; and foolish legends cannot long stand the test of enlightened inquiry'.[74]

Other travellers' attitudes were lukewarm. In his *Three Months' Residence at Nablus*, John Mills wrote that the Protestant community in Nablus had 'not much of [Protestantism's] true spirit', and 'were of very inferior quality'.[75] J.E. Hanauer (1850-1938), a Jaffa-born Protestant with Jewish ancestry who became the Canon of Saint George Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, claimed in *Walks About Jerusalem* of Protestant converts in Beit Jala, near Bethlehem, that

> The population […] are notorious, like those of many other Palestinian and Syrian Christian villages, for the readiness with which not only individuals but whole families exchange one form of Christianity for another whenever circumstances (such as the likelihood of obtaining the protection of some foreign consulate, or getting their military taxes paid), seem to render such a change advisable.[76]

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[72] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, p. 200; Boddy, *Days in Galilee*, p. 74; John Mills, *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans* (London: John Murray, 1864), p. 24; Thomas Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain & Lebanon* (Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1873), p. 39. For more information on Jamal, see Will Stalder, *Palestinian Christians and the Old Testament: History, Hermeneutics, and Ideology* (Minneapolis: Augsberg Fortress, 2015), pp. 112-125; for al-Karey, see John H.Y. Briggs, "The Revd Youhannah El Karey and Nineteenth-Century Baptist Missions in Palestine: Part 1", *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Winter 2014), 86-98

[73] Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain*, pp. 11-12

[74] Josias Leslie Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan: Scenes of the Early Life and Labours of OUR LORD* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1889), p. 259

[75] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. 103

[76] J.E. Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, 1910), pp. 248-249

This accusation included many of the well-established tropes of Palestinian Christians: their cunning, pecuniary opportunism, and failure to understand religion. In some travellers' eyes Orientals who converted to Protestantism remained Orientals, with everything that entailed.

Protestant travellers were theologically hostile to many aspects of the everyday practice of Christianity in Palestine, the 'monkish traditions' of Wilson and 'saints of the calendar' of Tristram, and the decoration and reverence of sacred locations with elaborate ecclesiastical buildings and icons. These seemed appropriately respectful to indigenous Christians and their clergy, but were an aberration to Evangelicals with their austere aesthetics. Thackeray, for instance, sneered in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at the 'fervour with which pilgrims kiss and weep over a tawdry Gothic painting, scarcely better fashioned than an idol in a South Sea Morai'.[77] Travellers reserved to themselves the right of the Bible's correct interpretation, seeing anything else as "invented traditions" and deviations. Kinglake accurately summarised their attitude, writing that 'many Protestants are wont to treat these traditions contemptuously, and those who distinguish themselves from their brethren by the appellation of "Bible Christians" are almost fierce in their denunciation of these supposed errors'.[78] They were unapologetic in denigrating traditions developed over centuries of Christianity's unbroken presence in its homeland.

Non-Western Christians never seemed more alien to 'Bible Christians' than when they worshipped. In his short story "A Ride Across Palestine" which mimicked the tone of travelogues, the novelist Anthony Trollope (1815-1882) wrote of worshippers in the Jerusalem chapel marking the Virgin Mary's tomb, that 'Eastern worshippers are not like the churchgoers of London, or even of Rome or Cologne', but were 'wild men', 'savour strongly of Oriental life and of Oriental dirt', and 'had murder and rapine […] almost in their eyes'.[79] Haskett Smith contemptuously described an Orthodox service in Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity as 'nothing more than a blasphemous mockery'. Smith's semi-fictional group of British tourists 'felt an innate repulsion at the travesty of Christian worship as it appeared to them', one exclaiming 'I confess that I do not remember to have ever seen or heard such a performance as this even in a Buddhist temple or a Hindoo shrine'. Smith's character, 'the Sheikh' (fig.

[77] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, p. 217
[78] Kinglake, *Eothen*, p. 219
[79] Anthony Trollope, "A Ride Across Palestine" in *Tales of All Countries* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1873 [1863]), Volume 1, 320-353, p. 327

5.4), informed his British charges that 'it is almost impossible for us, with our highly educated and refined conditions, to sound the depths of ignorance and childishness which characterize these Oriental Christians'. Smith topped this with an account of the Melkite ('certainly a very debased branch of the Church Catholic') Easter service he claimed to have witnessed in Haifa, involving such far-fetched details as 'several young fellows literally and truly play[ing] leap-frog over one another's backs up to the altar' to receive Holy Communion, and 'three or four guns […] discharged with blank cartridge in the choir of the church'.[80] These caricature-like descriptions were calculated to raise the hackles on Evangelical necks. Such sentiments meant some travellers avoided even stepping foot in churches. As Herschell wrote, whilst in Nazareth there were Orthodox, 'Romish' and Maronite churches, 'there was none which we could recognize as a church by worshipping with them'.[81]

Travellers contrasted their condescending depictions of indigenous Palestinian churches and the worship inside them with the austere Evangelical services occurring in missionary institutions. Most notable was Christ Church in Jerusalem, the first Protestant church established in Palestine, jointly administered by the Anglican Church and the Prussian Evangelical Church from 1849 to 1881.[82] Shortly after denouncing 'those palpable lies which the "Orthodox" Churches ask us to accept' at the Holy Sepulchre, Norman Macleod wrote in his *Eastward* that 'on the Lord's Day, I had the privilege of worshipping in the church presided over by the good Bishop Gobat. How pure, how simple, how true and refreshing was the service!'[83] Recounting the services held at the British Consulate in Haifa, Mary Rogers claimed that 'the Moslems always expressed themselves much pleased with the service, on account of its simplicity and reverence', highlighting the supposed superiority of Evangelical Protestantism for missionary activity.[84] To paraphrase Friedrich Engels, British travellers celebrated the dull Calvinist Sunday and fought against the merry Catholic (or Orthodox) one.[85]

[80] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 237-239, 243-244
[81] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-land*, p. 87
[82] Alexander Scholch, "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn 1992), 39-56, pp. 41-42
[83] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 137
[84] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, p. 189
[85] See Friedrich Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* (1886), "Part 4: Marx", https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1886/ludwig-feuerbach/ch04.htm (accessed 16/01/20)

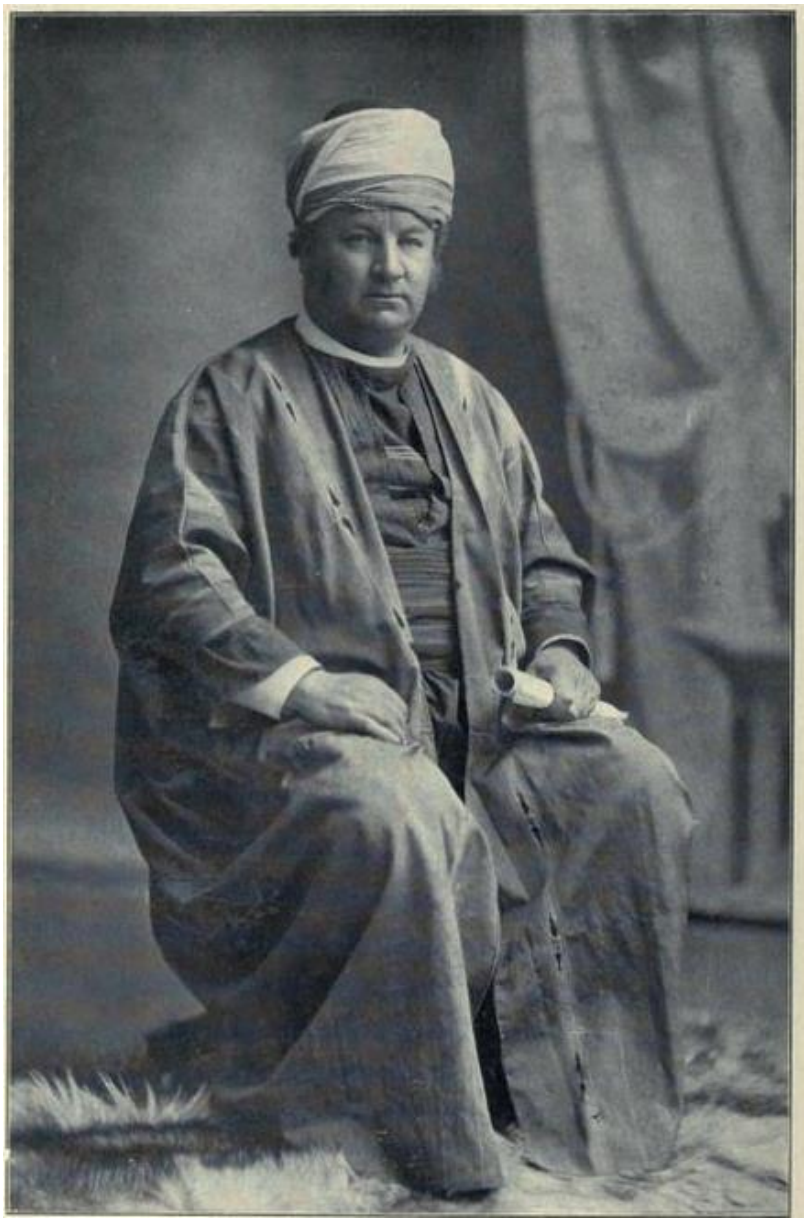

**Figure 5.4:**
**Haskett Smith in Palestinian clothing as "The Sheik",**
***Patrollers of Palestine* by Haskett Smith,**
**frontispiece**

The full extent of travellers' antipathy for non-Protestant Christianity is seen in their representation of one particular occasion. To members of the non-Protestant Churches in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Easter ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was the calendar's most sacred date, on the spot where Christ's resurrection was believed to have occurred. To British Evangelicals, the service was symbolic of everything repulsive about non-Protestant Christianity. Travellers in Jerusalem during Easter often observed the ceremony from the galleries above the

crowd; travellers never saw the ceremony recounted it from accounts of those who had. As Charles Wilson wrote in *Picturesque Palestine*, 'no description of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre would be complete without some notice of the ceremony of the "Holy Fire," which, to the disgrace of Eastern Christianity, is enacted at the present day'.[86] These accounts exemplified the travelogues' deep intertextuality, discussed below in Chapter Eight: the reader who had read one account had effectively read them all. Descriptions emphasised the chaotic lack of decorum also captured by Pre-Raphaelite artist William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) who began his painting (fig. 5.5) after making 'rapid mementoes of the moving mass' during his last visit to Palestine in 1892, though the written accounts added an extra layer of ideological attack on non-Western Christianity.[87] With the repeated allegations of the hubris, religious deception and even violence of the scene, the Holy Sepulchre at Easter stood through synecdoche for the entire Orient.

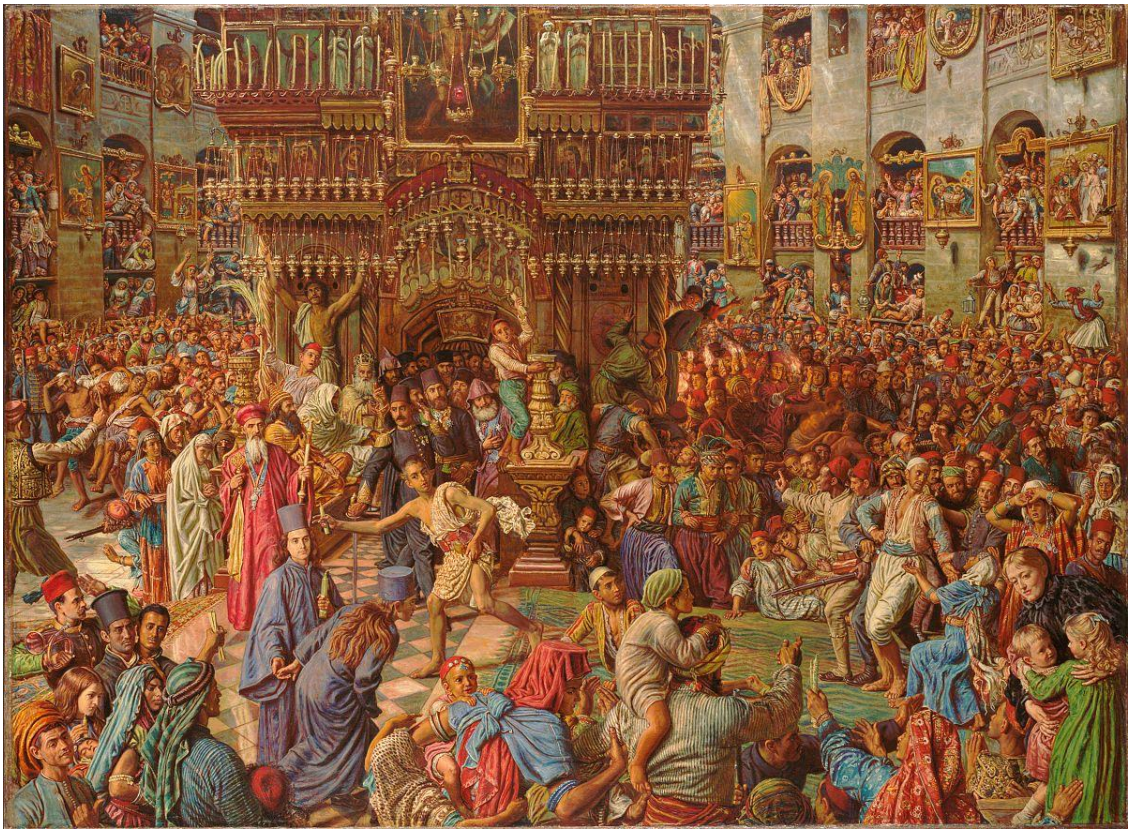

**Figure 5.5:**
**"The Miracle of the Holy Fire" by William Holman Hunt, 1892-1899, from the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

[86] Charles W. Wilson, "Jerusalem", in Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 1, 1-120, p. 23
[87] William Holman Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1905), Vol. 2, pp. 380-381

Unable to accept the ceremony as an integral part of Christianity's presence in the Holy Land, travellers could only make sense of it by likening it to non-Christian practices. Herschell, proclaiming that the ceremony meant that 'the Greek and other Eastern churches' were deserving of 'the palm of superiority of evil', stated that the Easter service (which he did not personally witness) had 'no parallel except in the rites of the heathen'. Herschell further quoted a friend who had attended the service to claim it was 'one continuation of shameless madness and rioting, which would have been a disgrace to Greenwich and Smithfield fairs'.[88] Mary Rogers similarly emphasised the 'wild-looking men, with their clothes disordered and their caps and tarbouches torn off – some with their long hair streaming, others with their shaven heads exposed' performing a 'frantic dance, that would have suited some Indian festival' around the Edicule covering Christ's tomb.[89]

Roger's mention of the *tarbush*, the hat worn by Ottoman subjects, accused local Palestinian Christians of the worst behaviour; Conder similarly described 'the Greek Christians, mostly Syrians by birth' as becoming 'worked up into a state of hysterical frenzy which would not allow them to be quiet for a moment'. He claimed that 'delicate women and old men fought like furies; long black turbans flew off and uncoiled like snakes on the ground, and what became of the babies I do not know'.[90] Ross also singled out those 'dressed in the red fez and gay garments of the native Christians of Palestine and Syria' for heaviest criticism, claiming to have seen youths engaging in 'one endless fight' and 'rolled along by willing hands over the heads of the crowd amid roars of laughter'. He irreverently likened 'the wild excitement of Bacchanalian revelry' to 'the frantic excitement' of the Paris stock exchange.[91] This was tame compared to Treves, who asserted that the service was 'only to be equalled by those degrading religious orgies which are to be met with in the forests of savage Africa', and resembled 'a kind of witches' sabbath'.[92]

Particularly arousing travellers' ire was the ceremony's highlight, the appearance of a flame from Christ's tomb, which the Orthodox and other participating sects claimed as a miracle. Evangelicals saw this as at best superstition, at worst unadulterated paganism, perpetuated by corrupt priests. Finn wrote that the fire's

[88] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-land*, pp. 143, 145
[89] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, p. 299
[90] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 176, 179
[91] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 99-100
[92] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, pp. 77, 78

appearance, 'as well as the orgies celebrated on the occasion by the pilgrims, may be paralleled in ancient heathendom', while Rogers similarly wondered whether it was 'a relic of the services of the fire-worshippers of old'.[93] Travellers provided their own explanations for the fire which could stand the test of post-Enlightenment European rationalism. Herschell guessed that 'a few ounces of alcohol' could be used to create it.[94] Burton recorded that another theory was that Orthodox monks had secreted a continuously burning 'lamp, which is blessed' behind a 'sliding panel' in the tomb, while claiming that her husband, the Orientalist Richard Burton (1821-1890), had been 'assured by educated Greeks that a lucifer box does the whole work'. Isabel, herself a Catholic rather than an Evangelical, was indulgent towards the practice, arguing that 'if Russia and the Greek Church were to throw off this old custom, as we Latins have, the Holy Week would lose half its wealthiest pilgrims, and […] Jerusalem would be very much impoverished'.[95] Others were less charitable, taking the claimed miracle as another opportunity to lambast the Orthodox clergy as deceitful, manipulative and false representatives of Christianity, and their congregations as wildly ignorant and complicit in their own deception through their supposedly outrageous behaviour during Easter. Conder wrote that 'every educated Greek knows it to be a shameful imposition; but the ignorant Syrians and the fanatical Russian peasants still believe the fire to descend from heaven'.[96] To this implicitly was contrasted, in travellers' minds, the plain and simple Protestant service, spiritual faith replacing irrational belief in miracles, and without the corrupt Church hierarchy which had been swept away in the Reformation and subsequent Evangelical waves.

Few attempted to defend the Easter service. Biggs was almost alone when he held the mirror up to 'Protestant travellers, who would never dream of denying themselves a single half-meal even on Good Friday', voyeuristically attending the Easter service to see the 'crowd of enthusiastic pilgrims, who have taken nothing but vegetables for six weeks, welcome the symbol of their Saviour's Resurrection', and subsequently 'report to their friends at home on the extravagance they mistake for irreverence'.[97] More travellers were in sympathy with the Muslim Ottoman soldiers present at the scene, whom Oliphant imagined must have felt 'contempt and disgust

[93] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 461; Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 305, 306
[94] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-land*, p. 152
[95] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, pp. 110-111
[96] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 181
[97] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, pp. 69-70

which one felt compelled to share', at the 'degrading rites and superstitions' of the Easter ceremony.[98] The attacks on the Easter worship in particular, and most of the beliefs and practices of Palestinian Christians in general, were an attempt to delegitimise the whole community as Christians. The stage was thus set for travellers' search for a Palestine – or at least a part of Palestine – which could be sanctified in Evangelical eyes, remaining free of indigenous presence.

## III.II: 'Place was the Object of Worship': Travellers and the Search for a Sepulchre

While the Easter ceremony was most virulently attacked by travellers' pens, there was plenty else that British visitors found to complain about the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The 'grim and wicked old building', as Conder described it, became easily the single most maligned location in all Palestine.[99] Traveller after traveller professed feelings amounting to disgust, their reactions shaped not by their antipathy to the non-Protestant Churches. Thackeray's vivid language describing the Church's interior was representative:

> blaring candles, reeking incense, savage pictures of Scripture story, or portraits of kings who have been benefactors to the various chapels; a din and clatter of strange people, – these weeping, bowing, kissing, – those utterly indifferent; and the priests clad in outlandish robes […] the English stranger looks on the scene, for the first time, with a feeling of scorn, bewilderment, and shame at that grovelling credulity, those strange rites and ceremonies, that almost confessed imposture.

Ultimately, Thackeray claimed, 'the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for some time, seems to an Englishman the least sacred spot about Jerusalem'.[100] Bartlett complained of the 'palpable absurdities' which 'disgust and repel us', such as the Stone of Unction inside the Church's entrance, and the 'tawdriness and bad painting, redolent of vulgar superstition' of the decoration around the Church.[101] John Wilson described his visits to the Church as 'sufficiently distressing and humiliating'; Manning

[98] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, p. 314
[99] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 170
[100] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, pp. 218-219
[101] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 173, 174

wrote of the 'long series of gaudy chapels' where 'acts of idolatry are witnessed the grossness of which recalls the fetish worship of Africa'; Porter averred that the Church made 'Christianity a mockery in the land which gave it birth'; and Hanauer claimed that the Church was 'grotesque, absurd, grossly idolatrous, and dishonouring to the name of Christian'.[102]

Travellers' profound aversion to the Church sprang from the radical mismatch between Protestant expectations for what the sites of Christ's crucifixion, burial and resurrection should be, and what they actually were. Travellers' imaginations were shaped from childhood by images such as that expressed in the popular 1845 Anglican hymn by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), which pictured 'a green hill far away/Outside a city wall' as the site of Christ's crucifixion.[103] Instead, they found something very different, as Charles Wilson explained in his *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre*:

> Educated pilgrims to the Holy City are often sorely perplexed when they visit the "holy places" for the first time. They know that Christ suffered without the gate. They find Golgotha within the walls of a small Oriental city and in close proximity to its thronged bazars. […] They see little in the church that seems to be in complete harmony with the familiar Gospel narrative.[104]

Rather than on a 'green hill', travellers found themselves in what seemed to them to be the most "Oriental" part of Jerusalem. It was more alien to the Protestant spirit in its "urbanisation", the original hill's enclosure within a labyrinth of elaborately decorated chapels, than the Haram al-Sharif, open to the skies and more tasteful to Evangelicals in its presentation – and, as discussed in the previous chapter, identified by James Fergusson as an alternative site for Christ's crucifixion. The Holy Sepulchre was, travellers considered, no place for the quiet, private devotion which Protestantism emphasised, rather seeming in Treves's words as a 'strident showroom, hung about with the jingling gewgaws of a country fair', and thronging with pilgrims and monks.[105]

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[102] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 444; Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 54; Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 77; Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem*, p. 63

[103] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, p. 78. For travellers' quotation of Alexander's hymn, see Andrew Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities Past and Present. Lectures Delivered on Sunday Evenings in Leslie Parish Church* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1890), p. 19; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 78

[104] Charles W. Wilson, *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre* (London: The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1906), p. 103

[105] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 78

Some travellers could not help expressing their mental fantasies of the Church being swept away. 'If this once irregular hillock were indeed Golgotha', wrote Elizabeth Rundle Charles in her *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas*, '[…] then what a desecration this building is! What one would give to be able to sweep away this heavy roof, and this wretched gold, and these marbles, and look up from this very spot to the sky', so that the scene more closely represented the Bible's narrative.[106] 'Away with this mass of masonry, these gorgeous chapels, these fumes of incense, the soft light diffused by innumerable lamps! Show us the grassy slopes, the rock-hewn tomb, canopied with the blue vault of heaven', Andrew Russell exclaimed similarly in his *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*.[107]

This closely accorded both to travellers' preference for relatively plain and unadorned places of worship, and for open rural landscapes over urban environments, discussed further in Chapters Eight and Ten. These combined to give rise to the sentiment that the best place for meditative worship on such events as Christ's crucifixion would be the "church" of Palestine's landscape. As Stanley wrote,

> The Churches of the Holy Sepulchre or of the Holy House [the Catholic shrine of the Santa Casa in Loreto, Italy, claimed to be Mary's house from Nazareth] may be closed against us, but we have still the Mount of Olives and the Sea of Galilee; the sky, the flowers, the trees, the fields, which suggested the Parables; the holy hills, which cannot be removed, but stand fast for ever.[108]

This was perhaps a way for British travellers to reconcile themselves to the fact that there was no Protestant presence at the main sacred sites, but also beneath the surface of Stanley's words ran a colonial current. While the non-Protestant Churches in Palestine presided at certain shrines associated with traditional sacred sites, Evangelical travellers conceptualised the entire landscape as existing to support their devotion. The entirety of Palestine, denuded of human presence, was brought into the Protestant gaze, and colonial desire.

This complex of attitudes formed the background to the debates over whether the Church of the Holy Sepulchre really covered Christ's tomb or marked an incorrect location, and the search of European Protestant Biblical archaeologists for the "true"

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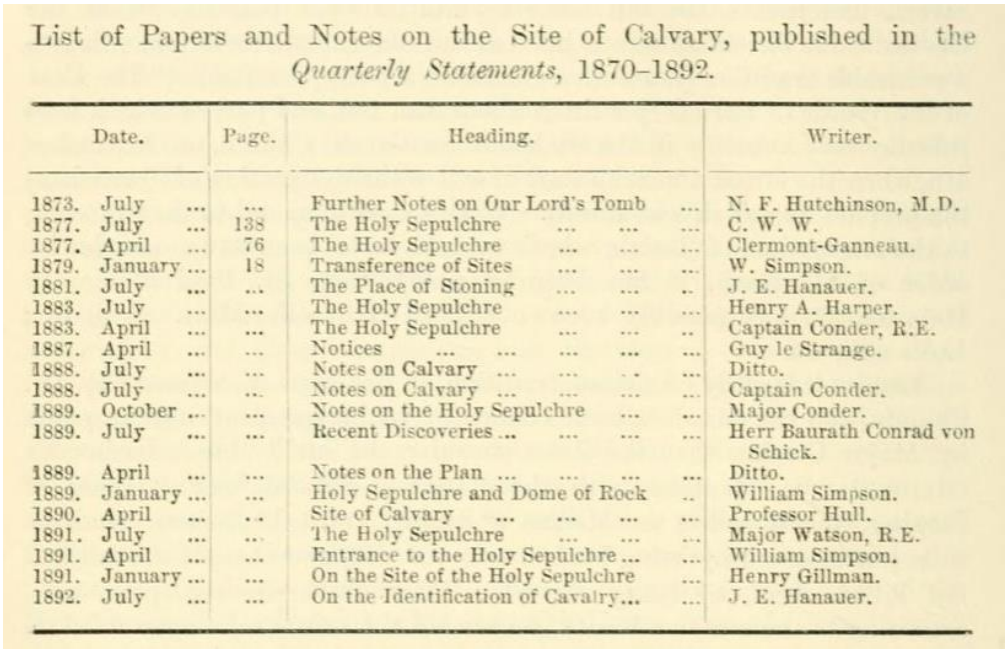
[106] Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), p. 146
[107] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, pp. 19-20
[108] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 472-473

site, culminating in the purchase of an area a short distance north of Jerusalem's walls in 1892 which would become the Garden Tomb. This story has been retold several times by academics.[109] However, there is room for an exploration of the extent to which this process was driven not only by "expert" archaeologists and Bible scholars, but also by "amateurs", travellers who closer resembled tourists, yet gained influence over subsequent travellers through the texts they produced. The search for a new Sepulchre was an intensely textual process: arguments were exposited and countered over the pages of the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* (fig. 5.6), won their adherents among travellers, and were repeated in travelogues for a non-expert audience. It was also an emotional process rather than scientific, in which feelings – again, often captured and set down on the page to influence the feelings of others in turn – played as much a role as hard evidence, which was extremely scanty. As outcomes of this discursive process, Protestants came to imagine, and after 1892 attempted to create, a part of Palestine free of non-Protestant influence and indigenous presence.



List of Papers and Notes on the Site of Calvary, published in the *Quarterly Statements*, 1870–1892.

| Date. | Page. | Heading. | Writer. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1873. July ... | ... | Further Notes on Our Lord's Tomb ... | N. F. Hutchinson, M.D. |
| 1877. July ... | 138 | The Holy Sepulchre ... ... ... | C. W. W. |
| 1877. April ... | 76 | The Holy Sepulchre ... ... ... | Clermont-Ganneau. |
| 1879. January ... | 18 | Transference of Sites ... ... ... | W. Simpson. |
| 1881. July ... | ... | The Place of Stoning ... ... .. | J. E. Hanauer. |
| 1883. July ... | ... | The Holy Sepulchre ... ... ... | Henry A. Harper. |
| 1883. April ... | ... | The Holy Sepulchre ... ... .. | Captain Conder, R.E. |
| 1887. April ... | ... | Notices ... ... ... ... ... | Guy le Strange. |
| 1888. July ... | ... | Notes on Calvary ... ... . . ... | Ditto. |
| 1888. July ... | ... | Notes on Calvary ... ... ... ... | Captain Conder. |
| 1889. October ... | ... | Notes on the Holy Sepulchre ... ... | Major Conder. |
| 1889. July ... | ... | Recent Discoveries ... ... ... ... | Herr Baurath Conrad von Schick. |
| 1889. April ... | ... | Notes on the Plan ... ... ... ... | Ditto. |
| 1889. January ... | ... | Holy Sepulchre and Dome of Rock .. | William Simpson. |
| 1890. April ... | .. | Site of Calvary ... ... ... ... | Professor Hull. |
| 1891. July ... | ... | The Holy Sepulchre ... ... ... | Major Watson, R.E. |
| 1891. April ... | ... | Entrance to the Holy Sepulchre ... ... | William Simpson. |
| 1891. January ... | ... | On the Site of the Holy Sepulchre ... | Henry Gillman. |
| 1892. July ... | ... | On the Identification of Cavalry ... ... | J. E. Hanauer. |

**Figure 5.6:**
**List of articles from the *PEFQS* on the Holy Sepulchre controversy,**
***PEFQS* Volume 24, 1892,**
**page 308**

[109] See Sarah Kochav, "The Search for a Protestant Holy Sepulchre: The Garden Tomb in Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (April 1995), 278-301; Seth J. Frantzman and Ruth Kark, "General Gordon, the Palestine Exploration Fund and the Origins of 'Gordon's Calvary' in the Holy Land", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, Vol. 140, No. 2 (2008), 119-136

As Haskett Smith wrote in an 1891 article defending the Garden Tomb's site, 'in the Holy Land itself […] cynically regardless of the most cherished traditions, a coldly calculating, strictly scientific, investigation has been applied to almost every so-called Holy site'. Smith claimed this as part of the spirit of the Victorian age, 'the period of investigation and discovery' with its new scientific methods heralding 'a complete revolution and a new revelation in almost every realm of natural philosophy and physical research'.[110] Seen more critically it was part of Europe's expansion of 'planetary consciousness', as Mary Louise Pratt has written, in which non-Western parts of the world were redefined in ways which overlooked the knowledge and experience of their indigenous residents.[111] Denying the authenticity of sites dominated by non-Protestant Churches was a way of textually bringing the fight to those rival interpretations of Christianity and challenging the basis of their extant superiority over Protestantism in the Holy Land. This endeavour gripped Protestant travellers, specialist and non-specialist alike, after the publication of Edward Robinson and Eli Smith's *Biblical Researches in Palestine*, which argued against the Church of the Holy Sepulchre's site.[112]

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was not the only established Christian site in Palestine to be challenged. The Church of the Nativity generated some controversy. As with the Holy Sepulchre, though to a lesser degree, some travellers balked at its presentation: Thackeray described it as a 'magnificent Barbaric Church', dismissing 'the idols set up for worship'.[113] John Wilson argued that 'the Saviour was not born in a subterraneous cavern' such as the one in the Church of the Nativity which was claimed to mark the spot, 'but in an approachable stable', ruling out the established tradition based on his own reading of the Bible.[114] A similar thought occurred to Jenner, who subsequently began a 'search for such a manger as those inhabitants of the place who are familiar with the gospel narrative understand to be there described'. He claimed to have quickly found a nearby recess with 'the form and dimensions […] almost exactly those of a cradle'.[115] With no archaeological knowledge or evidence, he nevertheless speculated that he had discovered the true cradle of Christ's birth.

[110] Haskett Smith, "Calvary and the Tomb of Christ", *Murray's Magazine*, Vol. 10, No. 57 (September 1891), 305-319, p. 305
[111] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 5
[112] Frantzman and Kark, "General Gordon", p. 124
[113] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, p. 222
[114] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 392
[115] Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain*, p. 86

Yet others, including those who attacked the Holy Sepulchre's location, asserted their belief in the Church of the Nativity's site: Conder asserted that the Bethlehem site could 'be accepted even by the most sceptical of modern explorers', while Haskett Smith wrote that, 'amidst so much that is false and spurious', travellers could be 'practically certain' of the site's authenticity.[116]

The stakes were far higher in Jerusalem, centre of the Christian world. Calling into question the veracity of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was an act of absolute iconoclasm. It cast aspersions on those who founded the Church in the fourth century, the Empress Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, two of the most important individuals in Christian history who oversaw the Roman Empire's transition to Christianity: 'the enthusiastic Helena and the politic Constantine', as Conder condescendingly labelled them.[117] It also made the claim that the veneration of the traditional tomb site for 1500 years by generations of Christians – not only indigenous Palestinian and Eastern Mediterranean Christians, but also the Crusaders, and countless pilgrims of the Catholic, Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic and other non-Protestant Churches – was based on a fallacy, while only the enlightened Protestants of the modern West knew the truth. Francis Gell (1825-1911), a missionary in India and Canon of Worcester, wrote in an article that the 'passionate devotion' at the Holy Sepulchre of 'group after group of frowsy pilgrims from the farthest corners of Russia', contrasted with 'my cold heart, because they believed, what I knew was a fable'.[118] While Smith claimed that 'the question is not one in any way of Catholicism *v.* Protestantism, but simply and purely one of evidence of fact', and indeed some Protestant travellers did uphold the veracity of the traditional site (while bemoaning its presentation), such a frontal attack on Christian traditions had little appeal for Catholic travellers. Burton, a supporter of the traditional site, acerbically commented 'how strange that all Christendom should have been mistaken for 1841 years, and that a handful should arise of late years to show us how wrong we have been'.[119]

While in the Palestine Exploration Fund's publications the debate revolved around the locations of ancient Jerusalem's walls, outside of which the sites of Christ's crucifixion and tomb had to be – as Gell admitted, leading to 'an interminable wrangle',

[116] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 145-146; Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 232-233
[117] Conder*, Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 146
[118] Francis Gell, "On the Site of the Holy Sepulchre", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 33 (1901), 299-305, p. 305
[119] Burton, *Inner Life of* Syria, vol. 2, p. 60

not least because no conclusive archaeological was ever found – emotions and sentiments played key roles in the search, among both touristic travellers and those recognised as authorities of Biblical archaeology.[120] It was not necessarily the Church's position within the existing sixteenth-century city walls which bothered travellers, but rather the site's control by non-Protestant Churches and the forms of devotion practiced there, which led travellers to deny the site. Most travellers agreed with Porter's claim that 'one's natural feelings revolt at the bare idea of Calvary becoming the scene and the cause of superstition and strife' during Easter, and it was easiest for them to reconcile themselves with the idea that 'the real place of our Lord's Passion was not dishonoured' because it was elsewhere.[121]

With no evidence other than gut instinct, Elizabeth Charles wrote of the Via Dolorosa, the traditional route of Christ's last steps ending within the Church, and the Church itself, 'surely *not* the street He trod – *not* Calvary'; Treves wrote similarly that 'the Via Dolorosa is a mere fiction of the Christian Church, a lane of lies, a path of fraud'.[122] Inside the Church itself, Jenner reported that his 'doubt grew into a conviction of the impossibility' of the Edicule marking Christ's real tomb, and he refused to accompany his guide to the Calvary site.[123] To some travellers, the worship practiced at the Church was the best argument against the site: God would hardly allow the tomb of Christ to be so 'dishonoured'. Complaining of 'the odour from so many dirty pilgrims', Agnes Smith wrote 'I sincerely trust the Sepulchre is not genuine, for I should not like to think our Saviour's grave is so much desecrated', while Conder was 'loth to think that the Sacred Tomb had been a witness for so many years of so much human ignorance, folly, and crime'.[124]

Many travellers took an agnostic view towards the Sepulchre's "true" location. While the evidence, they believed, was enough to disprove the Church's claim, it was not enough to indicate a more accurate site, and Stanley pronounced that the 'precise spot' of Christ's tomb 'will, in all likelihood, remain a matter of doubt always'.[125] To some Evangelicals, this seemed like part of God's plan, to prevent the development of practices among them which resembled those they critiqued among non-Protestant Christians, as Herschell wrote, 'that we may be kept from the worship of the visible,

[120] Gell, "On the Site of the Holy Sepulchre", pp. 301-302
[121] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 77
[122] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 65; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 54
[123] Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain*, pp. 125-126
[124] Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims*, p. 238; Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 170
[125] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 150

and from attaching peculiar sanctity to any thing material'.[126] This confirmed their own faith, while delegitimising the beliefs of others. Faced with the choice between the existing Holy Sepulchre and the absence of a known tomb, these travellers preferred the latter option, which brought Stanley's 'holy hills, which cannot be removed, but stand fast for ever' into Protestants' view – and desire.

Nevertheless, when alternative sites began to be identified in the latter nineteenth century, some traveller-writers enthusiastically embraced them as "holy places" which could be under Protestant control, bringing prestige and a Western spiritual foothold in Palestine. The most widely accepted new site was that proposed by Charles George Gordon (1833-1885) in 1883, which eventually became the Garden Tomb. Scientific reasoning and archaeological exploration played little role in this process, which was instead dominated by emotions. Gordon was partly driven by the antipathy he shared with other travellers to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which he called 'the slaughter-house' in the book in which he explained his strange theory of Jerusalem's topography resembling a human body.[127] The new site, a small hill known to travellers as Jeremiah's Grotto which included an old tomb, closely matched Evangelicals' mental image of the 'green hill far away': as Gell commented, 'the children who sang that simple ditty grew up to believe that it must be a hill just outside the existing city wall', and were quick to accept 'the Gordon myth'.[128]

After Gordon's death in Khartoum fighting the Mahdist Revolt, his imperial martyrdom also played a role in popularising the site.[129] His legacy was defended by British travellers with whom Gordon had been acquainted. Oliphant had met Gordon in the Crimea and China decades earlier, and Gordon stayed with him in northern Palestine after doing his "research" in Jerusalem. In his *Haifa*, Oliphant gave credence to Gordon's theory that Jerusalem's topography resembled a woman's body, with the hill of Jeremiah's Grotto as the head, writing that 'the lines of topographical configuration certainly bore out the resemblance in a very remarkable manner'; the theory somewhat resembled Oliphant's own esoteric beliefs.[130] The torch was carried for a further two decades by Haskett Smith, a close associate of Oliphant in Palestine,

[126] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-land*, p. 161
[127] Charles George Gordon, *Reflections in Palestine. 1883* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1884), p. 2
[128] Gell, "On the Site of the Holy Sepulchre", p. 299; see also Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture*, p. 78
[129] Frantzman and Kark, "General Gordon", p. 128
[130] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 351-352. Conder attributed Oliphant's acceptance of Jeremiah's Grotto to his reading of Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine*, before Gordon developed his theory on the subject. Claude Reignier Conder, *The City of Jerusalem* (London: John Murray, 1909), p. 154

and thus likely to have met Gordon at the time. Smith became, in the words of Scottish clergyman Malcom MacColl (1831-1907), the 'great protagonist of the site', authoring articles in the press and an entry on the tomb in the 1892 edition of *Murray's Handbook for Syria and Palestine*.[131] As a tour guide in Palestine, Smith also showed groups of Western travellers to the site, attempting to reinforce its authority with his emotive guiding technique, shown below.

Traveller-writers described the Garden Tomb area in terms starkly different to, in Smith's words, 'all the humbug which was shown us in that Church of the Holy Sepulchre'.[132] Even to those who did not fully commit to recognising the spot as both the site of Christ's crucifixion and tomb, portrayed it as a near-pristine part of Palestine's ancient landscape, and perfect site for quiet Protestant reflection – while geographically a part of the Orient, a location where all reminders of Islam, non-Protestant Christianity and everything else Oriental were thought to be absent. Several years before Gordon's theory, Conder (who already believed the site to be that of Christ's crucifixion, though not Christ's tomb) wrote emphatically of Jeremiah's Grotto 'I wish I could bring before the reader's mind as vividly as it now rises in my memory, the appearance of this most interesting spot'.[133] Writing after the site had begun to gain traction, Russell claimed 'it answers all the requirements of the Gospel narrative better than any other locality'; whether or not it was the true site, 'there can be little doubt that this green knoll is better calculated to impress and give one some idea of the real event than all those chapels and lamps and tawdry finery that are to be found within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre'.[134] After the area's purchase by Protestants, Helen B. Harris in her *Pictures of the East* expressed her gladness that the site would be 'preserved from injury and kept in fitting order, avoiding on the one hand any superstitious veneration of the spot, or its desecration on the other'.[135] Treves described the place as 'one of the few pretty spots in the suburbs of Jerusalem' and 'a secluded and unpretentious garden'. 'Every feature of the place fits in with the Bible narrative', he asserted, 'and the simple little spot enables one to realise, in a graphic and natural manner, every detail which that narrative lays bare'.[136]

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[131] Rev. Canon MacColl, "The Site of Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre.", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 33 (1901), 273-299, p. 278
[132] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 186
[133] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 194
[134] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, pp. 20-21
[135] Helen B. Harris, *Pictures of the East: Sketches of Biblical Scenes in Palestine and Greece* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1897), p. 36
[136] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 68

The full extent of some travellers' emotional attachment to the new site was expressed by Haskett Smith. 'If sentiment be allowed to enter into the question', Smith confessed, 'I must confess that I never climb that skull-shaped hill, and survey the scene from its rounded crest, without being moved by the deepest feelings of reverence, devotion, and solemnity. It seems a theatre so appropriate for the Drama of Earth's Redemption, a very ideal spot for the Crucifixion of the Son of God!' 'Sentiment' indeed played a vital role in his and other travellers' adoption of the site, as did its 'appropriate' and 'ideal' position outside the Oriental confines of the Church and Jerusalem's walled city. 'How infinitely more solemn and sacred are the feelings aroused by such a scene and such thoughts as these, than those which one experiences in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre', he stated. Swept up in millenarian and proto-Zionist enthusiasm, Smith even wondered whether the tomb's "discovery" could be among the 'signs of the times' heralding prophesied events.[137] In his *Patrollers of Palestine*, Smith put his guide's spiel on the record, and represented the reactions of British travellers to being informed that they were at the "real" tomb of Christ:

> A solemn hush fell on all assembled within that tomb […] and for some minutes no one spoke. The whole theme was so inexpressibly sacred, and the new light which had been thrown upon the historical proof of the Resurrection was so startling and convincing, that comments seemed superfluous and almost profane in that very tomb where, in all probability, the scene itself had actually occurred. […] The place whereon they were standing was indeed holy ground.[138]

Some travellers' emotions got the better of them even more dramatically. Welsh clergyman Hugh Price Hughes (1847-1902) admitted to the readers of the *London Gazette* that, visiting the tomb, 'I could not resist the desire to place my poor body on the very spot on which the Sacred Body once rested'.[139] While Western travellers scoffed at the reverence shown by pilgrims in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at which, as Porter wrote, they believed '*place* was the object of worship, and not *God*', Protestants' behaviour at the Garden Tomb was not always so different.[140] As Hanauer

[137] Smith, "Calvary and the Tomb of Christ", pp. 312, 317
[138] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 206
[139] Quoted in MacColl, "The Site of Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre.", p. 282
[140] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 77

lamented, 'going to extremes, a good many Protestant tourists show an inclination to make a fetish' of the Garden Tomb.[141]

Key to travellers' construction of the mythos of the Garden Tomb was the absence of indigenous Palestinian presence which, above all else, repulsed Westerners from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This was illustrated in H. Rider Haggard's account of the Garden Tomb in his *A Winter Pilgrimage*. Rider Haggard expressed his strong belief in the site's veracity, writing that 'standing in that quiet garden with the rock-hewn sepulchre before me, it was easy to imagine that here and not elsewhere' Christ's resurrection occurred. Yet this imaginative process, the traveller's casting their mind back to their mental picture of ancient Palestine before Islam and the development of mistaken Christian 'traditions', could only happen if travellers were undisturbed. Rider Haggard recorded that he accidentally crossed into an Islamic cemetery adjacent to the Garden Tomb, and

> inadvertently I stepped upon the pillar of an old Mahommedan tomb. Thereon a Moslem lady, one of a group who were seated in the sun basking and gossiping among the graves, hurled a lump of rock at me with considerable accuracy and force, helping it upon its flight with a volley of abuse. Instantly children appeared who also began to throw stones at the Christian "dogs" […][142]

The Garden Tomb's sanctity could clearly only be maintained if it continued to be a segregated Protestant-only space.

The Garden Tomb was never universally accepted by British travellers; this point was an obvious source of divergence in the genre of travellers' texts otherwise noteworthy for its uniformity. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre's position had its defenders: Eliot Warburton in his *The Crescent and the Cross* stated that the 'site I believe to be as real, as the panorama that the priests have gathered round it must needs be false', while Biggs argued that 'all the details you find in this ancient Church illustrate and confirm the Gospel Story', adding that Helena's selection of the Church's site was 'as scientific as any made by the Palestine Exploration Fund'.[143] After the purchase of the Garden Tomb, the debate could be positively vitriolic: MacColl,

[141] J.E. Hanauer, "On the Identification of Calvary", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 24 (1892), 199-200, p. 200
[142] H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), pp. 307, 308
[143] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 239; Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, pp. 88, 97

defending the traditional Church site, wrote bluntly that the argument was 'not a case of strong evidence against weak, but a case of overwhelming evidence against none', claimed that the group which purchased the land had been conned, and expressed his 'amazement, that they have already given £2,000 for a plot of ground which is intrinsically not worth £20'.[144] Prominent figures of the Palestine Exploration Fund such as Warren and Wilson continued to lean towards the Church's traditional location, or believe, as a previous generation of travellers had, that the tomb was lost forever; Conder upheld the hill of Jeremiah's Grotto as the crucifixion site, though shared their agnosticism that 'we must still say of our Lord as was said of Moses, "No man knoweth of His sepulchre unto this day"'.[145]

Whether travellers begrudgingly accepted the (to them) alien space of the Holy Sepulchre, advocated the familiar and exclusively Protestant space of the Garden Tomb, or claimed that Christ's tomb was lost forever, the controversy had far-reaching implications. Its reproduction in so many pages not only of dedicated archaeological publications, but also general Palestine travelogues, obscured Christianity as a living faith practiced by indigenous inhabitants of the Eastern Mediterranean, and shifted representation towards the ancient past and questions of interest only to Evangelicals. Whichever side travellers were on, they generally expressed themselves in the same language of hostility towards non-Protestant forms of Christianity, and longing for open landscapes free of the presence of contemporary Palestinians – in the case of supporters of the Garden Tomb, going so far as to construct such a space on the outskirts of Jerusalem. It was part of a discursive campaign of delegitimization of the sites, beliefs and practices of Palestinian Christians and, ultimately, challenging the very presence upon the land of indigenous Christian communities, waged in the pages of travelogues as much as anywhere else.

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Travellers' representation of Palestinian Christians and Christianity was deeply ambiguous. Sometimes holding up the prosperity and success of Christian individuals and communities as evidence for the faith's superiority over Islam, sometimes calling

[144] MacColl, "The Site of Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre.", pp. 273, 298
[145] Conder, *City of Jerusalem*, p. 156

for their protection and even intervention on their behalf, at other times travellers denied that Palestinian Christians were Christians at all. This attitude has remained ingrained in the views of some Evangelical fundamentalists until today: as the veteran Palestinian Quaker activist Jean Zaru has stated, 'in the view of fundamentalist Christians I, as a Palestinian, am not among the chosen. I am, rather, one of the cursed. As they see it I stand in the way of the fulfilment of the prophecy of God'.[146] The historic attacks on Palestinian Christians' religion equated to the denial of any of the ordinary solidarity between co-religionists, the abrogation of most responsibility for Christians in the event of the expected occupation of Palestine, and the suggestion that Jews in Palestine were far more deserving of British sympathy. The cause of Protestant Britain in Palestine was the cause of the Jews, not the cause of Palestine's Christians.

[146] Jean Zaru, "Theologising, Truth and Peacemaking in the Palestinian Experience" in Michael Prior (ed.), *Speaking the Truth About Zionism and Israel* (London: Melisende, 2004), 165-189, p. 179

## CHAPTER SIX

## 'A Remnant of the Chosen People': The Representation of Jews and Judaism

The last major community travellers encountered was the Jewish community, in Hebrew the *Yishuv*. The *Yishuv* was smaller than the Muslim majority and the Christian minority, increasing from around 7,500 in 1837 to approximately 85,000 in 1914.[1] Travellers' representation of the Jews was rife with ambiguity. The discord between travellers' image of what Jews in Palestine should be, and the reality they found, frequently combined with anti-Semitic tropes to produce negative depictions of Jewish life.[2] This extended to the Zionist immigrants who began arriving in Palestine in the 1880s. Whilst Westerners supporting the Jews' "return" might be expected to have welcomed the arrival of the Zionist settlers, in many travelogues there was instead only a brief mention where representations of the Zionist project could have been. The reasons for this, factors underlying attitudes towards Jews, traveller-writers' reactions to the pre-Zionist or "Old" *Yishuv*, Jewish religious practices, and Jewish conversion to Christianity, are explored in this chapter.

[1] Sabrina Joseph, "Britain's Social, Moral, and Cultural Penetration of Palestine: British Travelers in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine and their Perception of the Jews", *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 1995), 45-67, p. 49

[2] On the connection between support for Zionism by non-Jews, and anti-Semitism, see Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 121-125

## I: 'From the Days of Jacob Downwards': British Travellers and Jews

Attitudes towards Jews in Victorian Britain were complex. In the nineteenth century, British Jews achieved full political equality in 1858 with the Jews Relief Act. As V.D. Lipman notes, 'from the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, the Anglo-Jewish community steadily became more integrated in the wider community, more diverse in its occupations, more middle-class and Victorian in its habits'. Attitudes towards Jews moved away from stereotypical anti-Semitic images, to a more realistic recognition of British Jews. Yet these gains were fragile. With the increase in Jewish immigration to Britain following persecution in the Russian Empire in the 1880s, Jews began to be portrayed as a potential danger. This culminated in the 1905 Aliens Act barring Jewish immigration, the legislation being supported by the Prime Minister Arthur Balfour (in office 1902-1905), twelve years before his authorship as foreign secretary of the Balfour Declaration.[3]

Jews were never fully accepted as part of British and European social fabric, even by those considering themselves the Jews' friends. Jews were imagined as part of a "Semitic race", truly belonging to the Orient, whether or not they had ever set foot there. Edward Said notes that, as Semites, both European Jews and Arab Muslims were viewed by Orientalists as locked in the past, and that 'every manifestation of actual "Semitic" life could be, and ought to be, referred back to the primitive explanatory category of "the Semitic"'.[4] Jews in Europe were "othered", Orientalised, and linked to Palestine, rather than wherever they actually resided; this translated into both xenophobic hostility to Jews, and support for their resettlement in Palestine. Laurence Oliphant asserted in his 1882 article "The Jew and the Eastern Question" that 'in their common Semitic origin, Jews, and the majority of Moslems, possess a racial bond which separates them widely from the Aryan peoples of Europe, and which tends, in the case of the Jews, to attract them to those Eastern lands from which they have sprung'.[5]

Evangelicals had a special interest in the Jews in Palestine, for their connection with the ancient Israelites and their prophesied future role: the "restoration" of the

[3] V.D. Lipman, "The Victorian Jewish Background" in Anne Cowen and Roger Cowen (eds.), *Victorian Jews Through British Eyes* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1998), pp. xii-xix

[4] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 234

[5] Laurence Oliphant, "The Jew and the Eastern Question", *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, Vol. 12, No. 66 (August 1882), 242-255, p. 243

Jewish people to Palestine, their hoped-for conversion to Protestant Christianity, their redemption of the Holy Land's barren soil through agricultural effort. One decisive factor for many travellers wishing to visit Palestine was to observe the Jewish community and the traces of ancient Jewish history there; as the authors of a lengthy 1842 missionary report on the Jews in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean stated, 'anything that may invest that land with interest, will almost necessarily lead the reader to care for the peculiar people who once possessed it, and who still claim it as their own'.[6]

Most British traveller-writers arrived in Palestine with limited first-hand knowledge of Jews. Some had carried out missionary work among Jewish communities, such as John Wilson who proselytised amongst Jews in India, and John Mills who worked amongst London Jews.[7] Some travellers were themselves of Jewish origin. Ridley Haim Herschell was born a Polish Jew, though was baptised a Protestant at 23 and founded the British Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Jews in 1846. He continued to view Palestine as his 'Father-Land', as stated in his travelogue's title, and described Jews as his 'brethren'.[8] These individuals strongly supported Protestant efforts to convert the Jews, sharing this with members of the London Jews' Society, such as James and Elizabeth Finn. Along with visitors to Palestine with less direct knowledge of Jews, for whom the Bible and texts from antiquity such as Josephus were their main sources of knowledge on Jews, their main interest in contemporary Palestine was its Jews. They travelled between towns with Jewish communities to visit them and represent them to British readers, and demanded the British government's protection for Jews community in the Eastern Mediterranean at times such as the 1840 Damascus Affair.[9]

Yet by ardently supporting Jews' conversion, they also sought the Jews' negation as a distinct community. When this goal seemed furthest away – when the *Yishuv* seemed to be most Jewish in beliefs, practices and lifestyle – travellers turned against the Jews, making virulently anti-Semitic remarks. There was no correlation

[6] Andrew M. Bonar and R.M. M'Cheyne, *Narrative of a Visit to the Holy Land, and Mission of Inquiry to the Jews.* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co., 1878 [1843]), p. v
[7] For Mills's work in London, as well as his beliefs on Palestine, see Jasmine Donahaye, *Whose People? Wales, Israel, Palestine* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), pp. 50-61
[8] Ghetal Burdon-Sanderson, "Herschell, Ridley-Haim", *Dictionary of National Biography* (Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 26, 274
[9] Albert M. Hyamson, "The Damascus Affair – 1840", *Transactions (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 16 (1945-1951) 47-71

between the "philo-Semitism" of Evangelicals and real solidarity with Jews in Britain: Lord Shaftesbury, a prominent British proto-Zionist, opposed the Jews Relief Act.[10]

One traveller who did not hold this attitude, though also seeking to transform Jewish life in Palestine, was the British Jew Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), who visited Palestine numerous times from 1827 to 1875. Montefiore had an "insider" view of Judaism which impacted his observations of the Palestinian *Yishuv*, never abandoning his Jewish faith. Montefiore's interventions in Palestine anticipated settler-colonial projects, for example the Mishkenot Sha'ananim neighbourhood for Jews outside Jerusalem, and the Yemin Moshe windmill to give the Jerusalem *Yishuv* independence from non-Jews in milling grain. Montefiore also toured Palestine in 1849 with George Gawler (1795-1869), a colonial administrator in Australia who authored a proto-Zionist tract, *The Idea of the Jewish State*.[11] However, Montefiore wrote no travelogue of Palestine; his activities in Palestine are also well-recorded.[12] His travels thus lie largely outside this thesis's scope.

Most travellers arrived in Palestine with the Bible and their mental image of the ancient Israelites by which to judge existing Jewish communities. Travellers encountered very few visible traces around Palestine left by the Jews of antiquity: as John Kelman wrote in *The Holy Land*, 'every traveller is impressed by the very meagre remains of a material kind which Israel has left for curious eyes'.[13] Travellers thus drew on the Bible to imagine sizeable Jewish towns and on Josephus to picture a thriving metropolis of ancient Jerusalem. For the ancient Israelites, travellers drew on the *fellahin* and Bedouin, not the Jews, as models in physical appearance and clothing, but imbued the Israelites with a civilisation, national consciousness and divine inspiration denied to the indigenous Palestinians.

As Sabrina Joseph notes, most travellers 'were interested in the Jews only in so far as the latter were relevant to the mission of Christianity or the interests of the West'; but this had broad implications.[14] The Biblical Hebrews' history was

[10] Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 124
[11] Norman Bentwich, "Anglo-Jewish Travellers to Palestine in the Nineteenth Century", *Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 4 (1942), 9-19, p. 10
[12] See, for example, Abigail Green, *Moses Montefiore: Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); Louis Loewe (ed.), *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore, Comprising Their Life and Work as Recorded in Their Diaries from 1812 to 1883.* (London: Griffith Farran Okeden & Welsh, 1890), 2 Vols. Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) was another very prominent, though converted, British Jew who visited Palestine and wrote on it in the nineteenth century. Disraeli's work is also largely outside the scope of this thesis, though his novels contributed significantly to the "Peaceful Crusade". See Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 146-157
[13] John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 95
[14] Joseph, "Britain's Social, Moral, and Cultural Penetration of Palestine", p. 60

incorporated into English identity in Evangelicals' minds. In Benedict Anderson's terminology, the ancient Jews were imagined by Victorian Evangelicals as the ideal nation.[15] 'Their society had been framed and knit together by a perfect organization', wrote Richard Temple in his *Palestine Illustrated*. 'Their laws touched every relation of life, and reached the minutest details of the social system. Thus they were bound all together in one brotherhood, tribe with tribe, class with class. They were trained to obey their leaders as having divine authority'.[16] Temple's celebration of the Israelites' organisation reflected his own position as colonial administrator in British India; the Israelites were the ideal model for the British Empire in terms of social harmony and civilising role. The Israelites were endowed with all the attributes which British supporters of the imperial project saw as most worthy; as Frederick Treves wrote in *The Land That Is Desolate*, they were 'a brave, determined, and adventurous people', who, in colonising fashion, 'in their impetuous advance […] carried everything before them'.[17]

Traveller-writers also ascribed special qualities to present-day Jews, underpinned by Evangelicals' belief that Jews continued to maintain a special status as chosen people.[18] John Macgregor asserted in *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* that 'the Jews in this very land [Palestine], their own, were once the choice people of the world', and that 'now, through the whole earth, among the richest, the bravest, the cleverest, the fairest, the best at music and song, at poetry and painting, at art, and science, and literature, at education, philanthropy, statesmanship, war, commerce, and finance, in every sphere of life are Jews'.[19] Josias Leslie Porter exclaimed in *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* that

> Amid all their degradation and terrible sufferings, in all their later wrongs and social ostracism, the stamp of divinity remains to this day upon the Hebrew intellect, and heaven-born genius ever and anon flashes forth in every department of literature, art, science, finance, and politics to which

[15] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983)
[16] Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1888), pp. 101-102
[17] Frederick Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1912), p. 113
[18] B. Eugene Griessman, "Philo-Semitism and Protestant Fundamentalism: The Unlikely Zionists", *Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (1976), 197-211, p. 197
[19] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), p. 243

> the Jews devote their great powers. Amid the statesmen, scholars, artists, and financiers of Europe they hold a leading place.[20]

Charles Biggs in *Six Months in Jerusalem* emphasised the supposedly unchanging nature of the Jewish people, writing that while 'their moral and religious errors are the same now as three thousand years back', the Jews' 'excellencies, too, are permanent, and there is a Holy Seed still left which, in spite of all drawbacks, has a great future'.[21] These sentiments dovetailed with the beliefs of the British political class in a mysterious power possessed by the Jews, supposedly manifested in their alleged control of several countries and the global financial system. As Tom Segev notes, 'the men who sired' the Balfour Declaration 'believed the Jews controlled the world', an illusion sometimes consciously encouraged by Zionist leaders, such as the later first President of Israel Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952) who cultivated extremely strong relationships with the British establishment before the Declaration was issued.[22]

This discourse of Jewish exceptionalism, even when couched in philo-Semitic rhetoric, could easily descend into anti-Semitism. Bennett Kravitz notes that 'all philo-Semitic texts are anti-Semitic. Both types of texts create easily interchangeable stereotypes. One might just as reasonably hate the Jews for the very same reasons that […] any other philo-Semite […] admires them'.[23] Particularly prevalent in travelogues were accusations of Jewish avarice. In *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, William Henry Bartlett described a Jew embodying the 'motives which popular prejudice generally supposes to actuate the Jew', including 'intense love of money'.[24] 'Think of the centuries during which these wonderful people have remained unchanged', wrote William Thackeray in his *Notes of a Journey*, 'and how, from the days of Jacob downwards, they have believed and swindled!' Of the Jews in Jerusalem's Jewish quarter, Thackeray claimed 'you may track one of the people, and be sure to hear mention of that silver calf that they worship'.[25] Isabel Burton in her *The*

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[20] Josias Leslie Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan: Scenes of the Early Life and Labours of OUR LORD* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1889), p. 165
[21] Charles Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem: Impressions of the Work of England in and for the Holy City* (Oxford and London: Mowbray and Co., 1896), p. 317
[22] Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate* (London: Abacus, 2001), pp. 33, 39-45;
[23] Bennett Kravitz, "Philo-Semitism as Anti-Semitism in Mark Twain's 'Concerning the Jews'", *Studies in Popular Culture*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (October 2002), 1-12, p. 1
[24] William Henry Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1844), p. 191
[25] William Makepeace Thackeray [Mr. M.A. Titmarsh], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), pp. 140, 205

*Inner Life of Syria* summoned up the image of 'the fat, oily, cunning, money-making Jew'.[26]

Another frequent stereotype was uncleanliness, especially associated with Jewish quarters, as discussed below. Ada Goodrich-Freer described 'the characteristic Jewish smell of fish and onions' in her *In a Syrian Saddle*.[27] Thackeray surpassed other travellers in his depictions of supposed Jewish uncleanliness. In deeply unpleasant language, Thackeray wrote of Jewish passengers on a boat from Istanbul to Jaffa that 'the dirt of these children of captivity exceeds all possibility of description', and complained of 'the profusion of stinks which they raised, the grease of their venerable garments and faces, the horrible messes cooked in the filthy pots, and devoured with the nasty fingers, the squalor of mats, pots, old bedding, and foul carpets of our Hebrew friends'. He penned a dreadful poem on the subject:

> Strange company we harboured;
> We'd a hundred Jews to larboard,
> Unwashed, uncombed, unbarbered,
> Jews black, and brown, and grey;
> With terror it would seize ye,
> And make your souls uneasy,
> To see those Rabbis greasy,
> Who did nought but scratch and pray:
> Their dirty children puking,
> Their dirty saucepans cooking,
> Their dirty fingers hooking
> Their swarming fleas away.[28]

Several travellers emphasised Jewish rootlessness and separation from society, easily translating into overt anti-Semitism. Eliot Warburton referred to Jews as 'the race that is inhabitant in every country of the earth, and yet a stranger in them all' in *The Crescent and the Cross*, while William Hepworth Dixon in *The Holy Land* wrote that 'the Jews, by their own acts and teachings, cut themselves off from fellowship' with the world, which 'repaid them with scorn and wrong', thus blaming Jews for the

[26] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Vol. 1, p. 41
[27] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co., 1905), p. 305
[28] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, pp. 136, 151

oppression they experienced.[29] Most extreme was Biggs, who wondered whether 'Judaism might be developing into the Anti-Christ of today; it has shewn some characteristics of that great mystery which "in the guise of Christ opposes Christ"'.[30]

Even travellers who actively supported Zionist settler colonialism replicated anti-Semitic tropes. While pogroms targeted Jews in the Russian Empire, Oliphant argued that 'the recent disasters were inevitable, and […] unless the Jews are removed from the countries in which they have taken place, we may certainly anticipate their recurrence upon a much larger scale'. Supporting Jews' emigration to Palestine, Oliphant gave credence to the views of pogromists by 'admit[ting] all that is charged against the Jew by the natives' of regions where pogroms occurred. Oliphant claimed of 'the Jew' that 'by degrees he came to control all the small commerce of the country, and when he dared he took his pound of flesh'; by comparison, the 'sluggish and lazy' Slavic peasant who had joined the pogroms, 'was as certain to disappear before the sober, industrious, and highly intelligent Jew […] as the Red Indian of America before the Anglo-Saxon'.[31] A decade later, the persecution of Jews having continued, Claude Reignier Conder voiced the accusation that diaspora Jews were 'a parasitic nation', not refuting the claim. He argued that 'some other preferable alternative' should be found to Jewish refugees arriving in Britain, which would be 'thoroughly in harmony with the aspirations of the race'. Conder played on British non-Jewish fears of 'the dreaded influx of hungry foreigners' to make the case for sending fleeing Jews to Palestine rather than admitting them to England.[32]

This complex of travellers' attitudes towards the Jews – knowledge filtered through the Bible and ancient texts, support for Jews' conversion to Protestantism, twinning of philo- and anti-Semitic attitudes – shaped travellers' reactions to the *Yishuv*, as discussed next.

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[29] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 277; William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), p. 399. Anti-Semitism is also present in Dixon's strange anti-communist tract, published under a pseudonym, *Secret History of "The International" Working Men's Association*. In a chapter entitled "The Master-Mind", Dixon attacked Karl Marx, 'a Hebrew by his blood', who, he averred, 'would have stripped a Croesus of his money rather than a kaiser of his crown'. William Hepworth Dixon [Onslow Yorke], *Secret History of "The International" Working Men's Association* (London: Strahan & Co., 1872), pp. 24, 25

[30] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, p. 274

[31] Oliphant, "The Jew and the Eastern Question", p. 251

[32] Claude Reignier Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 149, No. 908 (June 1891), 856-870, pp. 858, 862, 864

## II: 'Not the Most Enterprising of Their Race': Reactions to the Old *Yishuv*

This section addresses traveller-writers' reactions to the Jews of the pre-Zionist *Yishuv*, starting with Jews in Jerusalem, and issues regarding Jewish work and agriculture which their lifestyle raised for the travellers. The section then considers representations of Jewish quarters in towns where Jews resided, and the differences in the representations of Ashkenazi or European Jews, and Mizrahi or Eastern Jews.

### II.I: 'Tinged by a Sallow Melancholy': Jews in Jerusalem and Ideologies of Work and Defence

Much of the travelogues' representation of Jews was in the context of Jerusalem, with its Jewish quarter, and expanding new Jewish neighbourhoods outside the city walls in the later nineteenth century. Traveller-writers linked the Jews' growing number to the Jewish "return": 'the children of the ghetto had returned to the land of their forefathers' wrote Biggs, claiming that Jerusalem's walled city was dwarfed by 'the long lines of red-tiled houses which stretched far beyond the utmost limits of the Roman city'.[33] Several traveller-writers described Jerusalem as a 'Jewish city', with Kelman stating that 'it was estimated in 1898 that out of the 60,000 inhabitants 41,000 were Jews, nearly six times the number of the Mohammedans'.[34] James Neil wrote in *Palestine Re-Peopled* that he 'unhesitatingly' believed that the increasing numbers of Jews was a sign of the 'momentous event' of the Jews' "return". 'Whereas ten years ago the Jews were confined to their own quarter in Jerusalem, the poorest and worst', Neil claimed, 'they now inhabit all parts of the city, and are always ready to rent any house that is to be let'. Describing Palestinian Muslims as 'entirely ignorant, and in every way unfit to form a dominant body', Neil concluded that 'the Jews, therefore, are at this moment in considerably greater numbers than any other civilised nation in the

[33] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, p. 54

[34] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, pp. 96-97
See also Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), p. 55: 'We are so accustomed to think of the modern Jew as a recent immigrant to Palestine that it is somewhat surprising to find that Jerusalem is virtually a Jewish city. Out of about 60,000 inhabitants some 40,000 are Jews'.
These figures contrast with Andrew Russell's 1890 account providing the figures (again, with no reference provided) of 8000 Christians and over 15,000 Muslims (i.e. a non-Jewish population of over 23,000) against 13,000 Jews. Andrew Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities, Past and Present. Lectures Delivered on Sunday Evenings in Leslie Parish Church* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1890), pp. 14-15

Holy Land'.[35] This was despite the fact that Palestine's Jews were only encountered in isolated pockets around the region; yet travellers saw the landscape as inscribed with Jewish history, and waiting for Jewish occupancy.

Claims of a large Jewish majority in Jerusalem were based on unnamed sources and guesswork. Using Ottoman statistics, Alexander Scholch found the Jewish population of Jerusalem was significantly outnumbered by the Muslim majority, and slightly smaller than the Christians of various sects, before the First *Aliyah* in the 1880s.[36] Overlooking the existing indigenous Muslim and Christian communities and calling Jerusalem a 'Jewish city', was ideologically motivated.

Whilst increasing numbers of Jews seemed convenient for prophecy, travellers with an idealised image of Biblical Israelites had a rude awakening when they observed the modern Jewish residents of Jerusalem. Traveller-writers presented the Jewish quarter's inhabitants as elderly, poverty-stricken, oppressed and depressed (fig. 6.1). Of the *payot* sidelocks worn by observant Jews, Treves commented that 'these greasy love-locks, which may become a youthful Jew of seventeen, look very eerie in an ancient man', and added that 'most of these Jews appear to be very poor; a curiously large proportion of them is very old, while there are few who are not abject-looking or whose faces are not tinged by a sallow melancholy'.[37] Jews' existence in Palestine was framed as degraded and pointless.

[35] James Neil, *Palestine Re-Peopled; Or, Scattered Israel's Gathering. A Sign of the Times.* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877), pp. 8-11
[36] Alexander Scholch, "The Demographic Development of Palestine, 1850-1882*", International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (November 1985), 485-505
[37] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 51

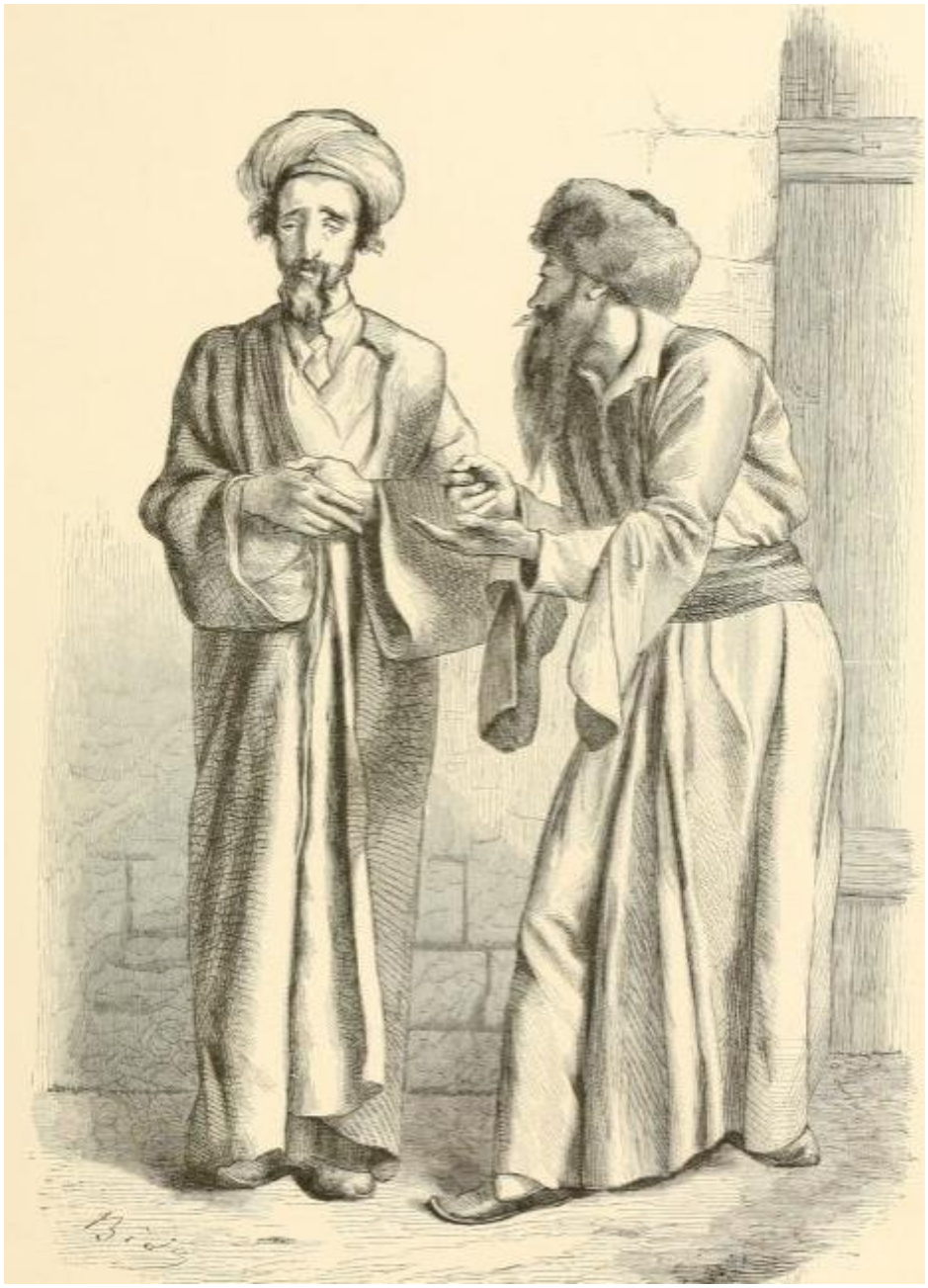

**Figure 6.1:**
**"Jews of Jerusalem",**
***Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**page 69**

Travellers contrasted their imagined Hebrew warrior-farmer, bronzed in the Holy Land sun, with the modern Jerusalem Jews, always to the latter's detriment. Quoting the Book of Isiah, Bartlett exclaimed:

> Here, then, among the ruins of Zion, still lingers a remnant of the chosen people but how changed their circumstances! Instead of the "mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent,

> and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator," we see a despised body, chiefly of exiles, crouching under general dislike and persecution; yet with inflexible tenacity clinging to the spot which recalls their past greatness, and inspires visionary hopes of future domination.[38]

Dixon claimed the Jews were 'living in a state of filth as unlike the condition of their clean, bright ancestors as the life of an English gentleman under Victoria is unlike that of a British serf under Boadicea', while Treves dismissed them as 'miserable representatives of those fierce, sturdy, hard-fighting Hebrews who cut their way into this mountain fastness and held for so long the stronghold of Zion'.[39] Kelman wrote simply that 'the Jew of Palestine is generally repulsive'.[40] Of Jews in Tiberias, H. Rider Haggard exclaimed in his *A Winter Pilgrimage*, that while he had hoped 'that upon their native soil we should find representatives of the race more or less as it was when it defied the Roman eagles', there 'were no hawk-eyed, stern-faced men such as I had pictured. Here even was no Hebrew as we know him, strenuous, eager, healthy, and cosmopolitan'. Instead he described Jews, male and female, as 'singularly sexless', with complexions 'curiously pallid and unwholesome'.[41]

Some travellers nevertheless claimed to discern traces of the chosen people. 'The Jew should be seen at Jerusalem – still the native city of his race', wrote Warburton. 'There, if the missionary or the political economist can make little of him, he is, nevertheless, a striking specimen of man'. He continued

> In the dark-robed form that lingers thoughtfully among the tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or bends with black turban to the ground at the "Place of Wailing," [the Western Wall, discussed below] you seem to behold a Destiny incarnate. That fierce, dark eye, and noble brow; that medallic profile, that has been transmitted unimpaired through a thousand generations and a thousand climates; these are Nature's own illustrations, and vindicate old history.[42]

Comparisons with other communities sometimes led travellers to take a better view of Jews. Finn, who as British Consul took a paternalistic view of the Jews as British-

[38] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 188
[39] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 212; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 51
[40] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, pp. 98
[41] H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), pp. 217-218
[42] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, p. 283

protected subjects, wrote in *Stirring Times* that, regarding 'domestic morality and family affections, these were the people in Jerusalem who could best afford to look an Englishman straight in the face'.[43] He proudly reported that he was known as 'half a Jew' because of his closeness to the Jews.[44] Oliphant recorded in *The Land of Gilead* that, spending the Easter of 1879 (which coincided with Jewish Passover) in Jerusalem, he 'felt it quite a relief on the night of the Passover to find myself away from the din of priests and worshippers, the guest of a humble family in the Jewish quarter, sharing with them the emblematic supper which celebrated their first deliverance'.[45]

To British travellers, it was a fault of the Jews in Jerusalem, as well as Hebron, Safad and Tiberias, holy cities in Jewish belief, that they were city-dwellers and customarily engaged in religious scholarship rather than manual labour. Dixon complained that Jews were 'always wailing and at prayer; never cheery and at work. A Syrian Jew at work! the very words seem to spurn each other'.[46] 'As yet nearly all the Palestinian Jews are crowded into the cities', wrote David Morison Ross in his *The Cradle of Christianity*. 'They are not the most enterprising of their race. They have a weedy look and an apologetic manner as compared with the vigorous unabashed Arabs. Their appearance suggests that they are the weaklings of their race'.[47] This approached the anti-Semitic concept of Jews lacking a useful social function.

Particularly disliked was the *chalukah*, a system by which diaspora Jews sent donations to their co-religionists in Palestine to sustain them in religious study. This clashed with Victorian work ethics of 'if any would not work, neither should he eat' (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Many travellers complained about the *chalukah*, seeing it as impeding progress and causing the degeneration of the Jewish community. Finn accused the Jews receiving *chalukah* of existing in 'a condition of mere and sheer mendicancy'. Criticising rabbinical power over the *chalukah*'s distribution, Finn complained that 'it begets a nation of paupers' and 'a race of spies and flatterers'.[48] Norman Macleod in *Eastward* similarly claimed the system created 'a strong

[43] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 1, p. 130
[44] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 56
[45] Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), p. 315
[46] Dixon, *Holy Land*, pp. 397-398
[47] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), p. 239-240
[48] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 64, 82

temptation on the part of the recipients to be idle, lazy, and suspicious; and on the part of the Rabbis, who collect and distribute the alms, to be tyrannical and dishonest'.[49] Kelman wrote that 'a subsidised religion is inevitably degrading. A man who receives an income for no other service to his kind than that he is a Jew is not likely to do credit to his ancestors'.[50] Goodrich-Freer called the *chalukah* 'the modern curse of Jerusalem'.[51]

Attacks on the *chalukah* came particularly strongly from supporters of Zionism. Oliphant wrote in *Haifa* that the *chalukah* maintained 'in idleness and mendicancy a set of useless bigots, who combine superstitious observance with immoral practice, and who, as a rule, are opposed to every project which has for its object the real progress of the Jewish nation'. Oliphant blamed the *chalukah* for conservative Jews' opposition to 'the establishment of agricultural colonies, or the inauguration of an era of any kind of labour by Jews in Palestine'.[52] He expressed his hope elsewhere that Zionism would 'extinguish the mendicant class who live on the Haluku, and the disgrace which Jerusalem now is to Judaism, and the Jews now idling in Palestine would be forced to become useful members of society'.[53] Alexander Boddy in *Days in Galilee* similarly linked Zionist settlement in Palestine with the *chalukah*'s end, writing 'nearly all the Jews in Jerusalem receive charity ("Haluka") from Europe and America, but the object of the Agricultural Colonies is to get the members to return any loan made to them, and to enable them to make a comfortable living in Palestine'.[54] The *chalukah* was attacked on similar grounds by early Jewish Zionists in Palestine, such as Oliphant's associate Eliezer Rokeah, founder of a colony near Safad, and the Hebrew language revivalist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922).[55] As Patrick Wolfe notes, Zionism's drive towards 'productivisation' and the 'conquest of labour', which led also to the exclusionary practice of denying Arab Palestinians employment, derived from 'discriminatory exclusions from productive industry' from which East European Jews suffered, and also a contemptuous attitude towards 'Jews who remained

[49] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), pp. 271-272
[50] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 99
[51] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, pp. 57-58
[52] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), pp. 69-70
[53] Oliphant, "The Jew and the Eastern Question", p. 249
[54] Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 254
[55] Ben Haldern and Jehudah Reinhardz, *Zionism and the Creation of a New Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 51

unredeemed in the *galut* (diaspora)'.[56] It was also a reaction towards the *chalukah* and Jews who, while residing in Palestine, were castigated as unproductive and overly beholden to diaspora Jewry.

Few Jews in Palestine were agriculturists, clashing with travellers' desire to see Jews redeem the land. Evangelicals conceptualised the Jews as once adept in agriculture, but losing their abilities after their departure from Palestine. Considering Palestine's colonisation by Jews, Warburton reflected that 'all its prospects are agricultural', but (quoting from the Book of Micah) 'the Jew has so long been accustomed to wander among the cities of the Gentiles, that he no longer desires "to sit under the shade of his own fig-tree, or to eat of his own vine"'.[57] In an article, Conder commented 'the Jews in Palestine themselves remind Europeans that they are not an agricultural people'.[58] 'The Jews lost their ancient power of doing agricultural work in their centuries of wandering', wrote Biggs, while Oliphant admitted 'it has been objected that the Jews are not agriculturists, and that any attempt to develop the agricultural resources of a country through their instrumentality must result in failure'.[59] To counter this, Oliphant revealed that in the early 1880s he had 'sent forty-five [Jewish] souls to some farms I own in America, and they have all settled down to an agricultural life upon them, in preference to other occupation' – a training ground for his settler schemes in Palestine.[60]

As already noted in this thesis, the Palestinian peasantry were lambasted by traveller-writers for farming ineffectively, but more positively represented when travellers recognised the indigenous farming taking place. Travellers attached moral value to farming in Palestine; they were particularly harsh on the Jews for their failure to till the soil. This led to a number of Western projects in Palestine, such as the Mikveh Israel agricultural school established by the Alliance Israélite Universelle near Jaffa in 1870, to teach Jews to farm, to develop Jewish self-sufficiency and communal separation, and begin the land's "redemption".[61] Another project, the Kerem Avraham plantation of James and Elizabeth Finn, is discussed in Chapter Eleven.

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[56] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native", *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006), 387-409, pp. 389, 390

[57] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, p. 280

[58] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine. [Reprinted from the Jewish Chronicle, by Kind Permission of the Editor.]", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 11 (Spring 1879), 6-15, p. 8

[59] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, p. 284; Oliphant, *Land of Gilead,* p. 19

[60] Oliphant, "The Jew and the Eastern Question", p. 251

[61] Little has been written in English on the Mikveh Israel school. A short appraisal is found in Henrietta Szold, "Recent Jewish Progress in Palestine", *The American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 17 (September 1916), 24-158, p. 78. Szold (1860-1945), an American Zionist activist, was dismissive of Mikveh Israel, which still functioned as one

Traveller-writers represented Jews as weak, submissive and sickly (particularly compared to the warlike Israelites), despised by other Palestinian communities, and needing protection by Western powers. In *Eothen*, Alexander Kinglake described attacks on Jews in Safad in 1834, partially blaming the victims when writing that 'the poor Jews were so stricken with terror that they submitted to their fate, even when resistance would have been easy'.[62] The travelogues are peppered with anecdotes of helpless Jews, such as Shaayea, an Aleppan Jew travelling on a ship to England but apparently throwing himself overboard in fear at mistreatment by Christians, in Mary Eliza Rogers's *Domestic Life in Palestine*, and a hapless family of Iranian Jews 'in a very parlous state', whom Rider Haggard explained were barred from Palestine because of their inability to pay *baksheesh*.[63] Finn claimed Jews were 'subjected to exactions and plunder' by Muslims, who 'understood' the *chalukah* system and devised ways to part the Jews from this money; that Jews were 'timid under oppression'; and that during 'disturbances' (not directed against Jews) during the Crimean War, given 'the danger which the poor Jews (British protégés and others) were in', 'something must be done' to protect them – part of the British Consul's role.[64]

Finn was far from alone in thinking this. After the attack on Jews during the Damascus Affair, as Abigail Green notes, protection of the Jews became an Evangelical and imperial cause in Britain.[65] Herschell remarked that it was only 'the interest taken by the English nation at large in the persecuted Jews' which prevented more suffering in Damascus.[66] Some travellers anticipated further disasters unless Jews both received British protection and reformed themselves. Isabel Burton addressed Eastern Jews (hardly likely to read her book in significant numbers), warning that 'the Moslem will rise not really against the Christian – he will only be the excuse – but against you. Your quarter will be the one to be burnt down; your people

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of the old charitable institutions rather than an organ of Jewish self-determination. She complained 'the institution [Mikveh Israel] has not been an effective factor in the agricultural development of Palestine. It has stood away from the swift currents of Jewish life there, somewhat as the administrators of the Rothschild colonies are charged with having'. p. 78

[62] Alexander W. Kinglake [Anonymous], *Eothen: or, Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), pp. 381

[63] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), pp. 401-410; Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 350

[64] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, pp. 103, 129, 411

[65] See Hyamson, "The Damascus Affair"; Abigail Green, "The British Empire and the Jews: An Imperialism of Human Rights?", *Past & Present*, No. 199 (May 2008), 175-205

[66] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to My Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co.: 1856), p. 64

to be exterminated, and all your innocent tribe will suffer for the few guilty' of moneylending and exploiting the non-Jewish population.[67]

Ross commented of Jews at the Western Wall that 'a weakly set of men they are compared with the vigorous Arabs, the supple Syrians, or the robust Russians'.[68] Rider Haggard wrote of the same scene that, given the apparent humiliation of Jews by the 'motley crowd' watching them, he would understand if the Jews would 'drill, buy arms, and make an insurrection', but rather they preferred 'to await the advent of their Messiah, a man of blood and power, a Jewish Napoleon' to redeem them. 'Imagine men who will submit to it all!' Rider Haggard asked. 'Imagine, also, what those fierce old heroes who held that wall for so long against the might of Rome would think and say of these descendants if they could see them thus mocked and humiliated at its foot!'[69]

Rider Haggard was, in essence, articulating the ideology of the *Haganah*, the Labour Zionist paramilitary founded in 1920, armed for the defence of the New *Yishuv* and, in 1948, the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. Similar militias were formed by the right-wing Revisionist Zionist movement, inspired by its leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940), who articulated their ethos:

> Our starting point is to take the typical Yid of today and to imagine his diametrical opposite […]. Because the Yid is ugly, sickly, and lacks decorum, we shall endow the ideal image of the Hebrew with masculine beauty. The Yid is trodden upon and easily frightened and, therefore, the Hebrew ought to be proud and independent. […] The Yid has accepted submission and, therefore, the Hebrew ought to learn how to command.[70]

As Sheila H. Katz points out, these Zionist militias rested on a vision of 'the "New Man" of Jewish nationalism […] supposed to overturn the powerlessness of two thousand years by taking a physical stand to defend himself, his women, and children'.[71] This transformation of Palestinian Jews from supposedly weak and timid religious scholars, to militarised fighters like the Hebrews of old, was the actualisation of the change Rider

[67] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, p. 343
[68] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 68
[69] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, pp. 341-342
For the role played by the *Haganah* in 1948, see Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006)
[70] Quoted in Cynthia M. Baker, *Jew* (New Brunswick and New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2016), p. 63
[71] Sheila H. Katz, "*Shahada* and *Haganah*: Politicizing Masculinities in Early Palestinian and Jewish Nationalisms", *The Arab Studies Journal* Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1996), 79-94, p. 81

Haggard and other travellers had wished to see, albeit couched in terms they could not have imagined.

## II.II: 'The Danger and Opprobrium of the Holy Land': Representing the Jewish Quarters

Alongside Jerusalem, the traditional centres of the Old *Yishuv* were Hebron, Safad and Tiberias. In 1871-1872 there were 630 Jewish households in Jerusalem, 200 in Hebron, 400 in Tiberias and almost 1200 in Safad, together constituting most Jews in Palestine.[72] This remained the case until the New *Yishuv* of Zionist immigrants, based in agricultural colonies and the expanding urban centres Haifa and Tel Aviv, passed the Old *Yishuv* in size in 1918.[73]

As discussed later in this thesis, most travellers' real interest lay in Palestine's rural landscapes. Jews were practically absent from the countryside until the colonies of the First *Aliyah*, visited by few travellers, as discussed below. To see Jewish communities, travellers ventured into the towns, frequently represented as squalid, unhygienic and dangerously Oriental in character, to the Jewish quarters. Stopping by the Jewish quarter became an essential part of a visit to any town where Jews resided, even Nablus, where a tiny Jewish community existed; John Wilson recorded in *The Lands of the Bible* that the rabbi of Nablus complained that 'the ruling rabbi at Jerusalem' had forbidden the Jews 'to think of colonizing the country at present, or even, generally speaking, to engage in secular pursuits', while Goodrich-Freer wrote oddly that Nablus Jews possessed 'that type of feature, so rarely seen in the East, which we habitually associate with a Cockney accent'.[74]

In the four major centres of Jewish life, traveller-writers' representations were largely determined by their reactions to the Jewish neighbourhoods. Through synecdoche, Jewish quarters effectively stood for all urban society, though the number of Jews in towns was still small compared to Muslims and Christians (only in Tiberias did Jews constitute an absolute majority in 1871-1872). In Hebron, interest in the small

[72] Scholch, "The Demographic Development of Palestine, 1850-1882"
[73] Arthur Ruppin, "Twenty-Five Years of Palestine: A Résumé of Jewish Effort and Achievement" in Meyer W. Weisgal (ed.), *Theodor Herzl: A Memorial* (New York: The New Palestine, 1929), 195-210, p. 209
[74] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (Edinburgh: William White and Co., 1847), Volume 2, p. 62; Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 195

Jewish quarter was partially overshadowed by the Ibrahimi Mosque, the burial place of Abraham and other Biblical figures. John Wilson did provide a picture of Hebron's Jewish community, among whom he stayed for three days. Wilson represented them as impoverished, with 'very small and humble' synagogues, and 'money […] taken from them by the Muhammadans on every kind of pretence', though he admitted that 'entire freedom of worship […] is now accorded to them'.[75] In Safad and Tiberias, however, there were no significant holy sites of interest to Western travellers, and barring Tiberias's proximity to the Sea of Galilee, little to distract traveller-writers from focusing their representations upon the Jewish quarters.

The dominant feature of the representations of the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem, Safad and Tiberias, was the emphasis on their uncleanliness. Descriptions of the sanitary conditions of Jewish neighbourhoods, frequently unflattering in the extreme, were common, dovetailing with anti-Semitic concepts of Jewish dirtiness. While traveller-writers recognised that Jews' living conditions were due to poverty, they were nevertheless judged harshly, again in implicit comparison with their Biblical ancestors, and sympathy was dependant on whether the Jews would "civilise" or "modernise" themselves. Traveller-writers judged Jewish life in Palestine against their idea of ancient Jewish existence. The state of the Jewish quarters was used both to turn the Jews into an object of pity, and to emphasise the far-reaching changes they would have to undergo before becoming worthy of their Biblical inheritance.

Jerusalem's Jewish quarter was almost universally described as cramped, filthy and smelly. 'If the traveller have the courage to inhale the infected air of its close alleys', Bartlett evinced, 'reeking with putrid filth, he will soon hasten out of them, with the deepest impression of the misery and social degradation of their unhappy occupants'. He claimed that 'the lower class of Jews is everywhere squalid and negligent', in Jerusalem the Jews' 'excuse' being 'their deep poverty, and the oppressions to which they have been subject'.[76] Thackeray wrote 'the Ghetto of Jerusalem is pre-eminent in filth. The people are gathered round about the dung-gate of the city'. He linked his impression of the uncleanliness of Jews with the uncleanliness of their residential quarter, writing of an 'old Polish Patriarch, venerable in filth, stalking among the stinking ruins of the Jewish quarter'.[77] Dixon luridly

[75] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. 373, 374
[76] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 80-81, 187
[77] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, pp. 205, 207

described 'the Jewish quarter, which a man may smell afar off; a quarter goodly in itself, once covered with the palaces of priests and kings, but now the danger and opprobrium of the Holy Land', with its 'alleys and courts unspeakably offensive to eye and nostril'.[78] Macleod compared the Jewish quarter to slums in Britain and Ireland, claiming it was 'a wretched, filthy place, squalid as the "liberties" of Dublin, the "slums" of London, or the "closes" of Glasgow or Edinburgh'.[79]

This attitude towards Jerusalem's Jewish quarter anticipated the reaction of the Zionist leader Theodor Herzl when he visited Palestine in 1898. The secular Herzl had none of the religious attachment to Jerusalem which had concentrated the Old *Yishuv* there. Herzl wrote in his diary that 'the musty deposits of 2,000 years of inhumanity, intolerance, and uncleanness lie in the foul-smelling alleys', and that 'if we [the Zionist movement] ever get Jerusalem', he would 'begin by cleaning it up' and even 'empty the nests [the residential quarters] of filth and tear them down'. He wrote disparagingly that 'the local Jewish community is like the rest of them', described the Western Wall as 'pervaded by a hideous, wretched, speculative beggary', and described a Jewish hospital as 'misery and uncleanliness'. Herzl envisaged 'a very pretty, elegant town' inhabited by Jews *outside* the old city's walls.[80] This was partly achieved through British Mandate policy encouraging Jewish settlement in the "new city" outside Jerusalem's walls, whilst confining indigenous Palestinian life within the walls.[81] This had been prepared by decades of negative representation of Jewish life by British travellers. When Herzl and his successors in the Zionist movement spoke about reforming Jewish existence in Palestine, to non-Jewish representatives of imperial powers from which they wanted support, they did not invent a new discourse, but tapped into the well-established language of Western travellers.

In Safad and Tiberias, traveller-writers presented a similar picture. Finn, who deplored the Jerusalem Jews' living conditions, reported positively of Safad, writing of 'the healthy complexion of the numerous Jews residing there'.[82] However, Henry Baker Tristram in *The Land of Israel* more typically claimed that 'all outside was squalid and filthy', although he noted that inside the German Jews' houses were 'absolutely

[78] Dixon, *Holy Land*, pp. 211, 217
[79] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 161
[80] Raphael Patai (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl* (New York and London: Herzl Press and Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), Vol. 2, pp. 745-747. See also Sufian Abu Zaida, "'A Miserable Provincial Town': The Zionist Approach to Jerusalem from 1897-1937", *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 32 (2007), 70-87
[81] Nicholas E. Roberts, "Dividing Jerusalem: British Urban Planning in the Holy City", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Summer 2013), 7-26
[82] James Finn, *Byeways in Palestine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877), p. 107

Dutch' in cleanliness.[83] Selah Merrill (1837-1909), American Consul in Jerusalem in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, wrote in *Picturesque Palestine* that 'being situated on the summit of a hill, one would expect to find the town tolerably clean', but 'on the contrary, the streets are filthy, and there does not appear to be any desire to improve them'.[84] Oliphant wrote similarly that 'the aspect of the population is in keeping with the general smell. One seems transported into the ghetto of some Roumanian or Russian town, with a few Eastern disagreeables added'.[85] Oliphant's relief work among Russian Jewish refugees in the early 1880s, and support for Romanian Jewish Zionist settlers in Palestine, did not seem to positively influence his opinion of these communities. Porter was incredulous of Safad's sacredness in Judaism, noting the 'decay and ruin' of its synagogues, and the 'poverty and misery' of its Jewish inhabitants.[86]

Tiberias received even harsher treatment. Traveller-writers competed over how abject and unpleasant they could make the town and its Jewish life seem. Kelman wrote 'the Jewish quarters are famous for their excessive dirt' – famous they were, for Western travellers.[87] Among the few with something positive to write was Tristram, who again saved his praise for the domestic interiors, 'clean and bright inside for the Sabbath'. The Jewish women also 'were generally handsome, and some of the girls very beautiful and fair'. Alternately, the 'shattered place' of the town itself, heavily damaged by an earthquake in 1837, Tristram described as 'an apt type of the decayed and scattered people, with their musty and crumbling learning'.[88] This was mild. Linking low hygiene with Jewish presence, Kinglake wrote that after visiting the town he 'knew by my experience of Tabarieh that a "holy city" was sure to have a population of vermin somewhat proportionate to the number of its Israelites'.[89] John Macgregor in *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* complained 'the town of Tiberias is chiefly remarkable for the exceeding filthiness of most of its streets, and especially in the Jews' quarter', and asked, 'Jews amongst us Gentiles in England have refinement, cleanliness, luxury, and elegance – why don't they send to the Rabbis of Galilee, at any rate,

[83] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), p. 576
[84] Selah Merrill, "Galilee" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 2, 49-96, p. 89
[85] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 69
[86] Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan*, p. 164
[87] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 99
[88] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 424, 427
[89] Kinglake, *Eothen*, pp. 378-379

besoms and soap?' This 'attack upon the people's nastiness in this city is not too severe', Macgregor claimed, 'nor is it made by an enemy, but by a friend of the "nation scattered and peeled"'. Touching explicitly on proto-Zionist concerns, and claiming that Westerners had a greater appreciation of Palestine than Jews residing there, Macgregor wondered

> How, with all their love their love of their people and their land, they leave it to us Christians to search for their records among the rubbish of their ruined cities – how they never ask the world for what the world would give them free, their own beloved Palestine, while they still with obstinate persistence cling to a hopeless hope.

Macgregor added 'while I was at Tiberias I read in the "Times" of millions of gold left by [James Meyer de (1792-1868)] Rothschild's will. At last, then, there are hopeful signs of Judaea being methodically colonized by Jews'.[90] Tiberias served as a diametrical opposite to what travellers thought Jewish existence should be and might become.

'From the swarms of vermin with which it is infested the Arabs have a proverb that "the king of the fleas lives at Tiberias"' penned Samuel Manning in *"Those Holy Fields"*.[91] Several traveller-writers repeated this convenient soundbite. Porter described Jews' veneration of Tiberias as 'strange devotedness', and wrote further that

> The streets are narrow and filthy, the houses are mean and mostly tottering, the climate is unhealthy, the heat in summer is intense, and fever and ophthalmia are very prevalent. The people I met in the lanes, in the fields, and along the beach, especially the foreign Jews, were squalid and sickly-looking, the very pictures of misery and suffering.[92]

These sentiments on Tiberias's Jews were frequently repeated. To Kelman, 'the younger men and lads of Tiberias' were 'the most unpleasant-looking of all the inhabitants of the land. They are so neurotic and effeminate, and at the same time so monstrously supercilious'.[93] Treves described 'the most dejected specimens' as 'certain Jews who crawl about the city like peevish convalescents', concluding that

[90] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), pp. 356-357
[91] Samuel Manning, *"Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 198
[92] Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan*, p. 83
[93] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 99

'Tiberias, the sickly city, […] exists to prove that mere stench is not fatal and that the persistence of human life is not incompatible with sturdy vermin and the lack of every observance of hygiene'.[94]

Like other Jewish quarters, Tiberias's Jewish quarter was reduced from a living society to a trope of abjection, humiliation and the "fall" of the Jews to their present wretchedness. Macleod was not alone in hoping that 'the commercial cities of New York, London, Paris, or Frankfort, could very soon revolutionise for good the "holy" cities of Hebron, Jerusalem, Tiberias, and Safed'.[95] Traveller-writers' views of what they thought the Jews in Palestine should be, led to, as Sabrina Joseph states, 'their inability to understand the Jews as a changing community living among a changing people'.[96]

## II.III: 'A Peculiar and Characteristic Physiognomy': Representing Difference Between Eastern and Western Jews

An interesting aspect of the representation of Jews in Palestine is traveller-writers' representation of qualitative differences between different Jewish communities. Travellers distinguished between Ashkenazi Jews from Europe (including religious Jews who had immigrated to Palestine since the eighteenth century, and the Zionist immigrants from the late nineteenth century) and Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews (the former of Spanish Jewish descent, the latter from Middle Eastern regions, though the terms were sometimes conflated). As Conder stated in his *Tent Work in Palestine*, 'the Spanish, Mughrabee [North African], Russian, and German Jews' were 'each marked by a peculiar and characteristic physiognomy'; Spanish and 'Mughrabee' Jews were supposedly 'more dignified in bearing' than their European counterparts.[97]

This was only a hint at the qualities traveller-writers ascribed to the distinct Jewish communities. 'Nothing can be more striking than the marked difference in appearance and costume between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim', wrote Charles Wilson in *Picturesque Palestine*. 'The former are far superior in culture and manners; they have generally dark complexions, black hair, and regular features; they are fairly

[94] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, pp. 196-197
[95] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 274
[96] Joseph, "Britain's Social, Moral, and Cultural Penetration of Palestine", p. 66
[97] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), pp. 162-163

industrious and honest; they dress in Oriental costume, and are not wanting in a certain dignity'. His representation of the Ashkenazi Jews focused on their 'pale complexions and flaxen hair' and their sidelocks.[98] Finn complained that among the Ashkenazim were 'the most extremely fanatical and bigoted of the people', i.e. those most opposed to Western Christian missionary efforts; Conder wrote 'if one half the stories which have been related to me by trustworthy witnesses were admitted, the Ashkenazim must be the dirtiest people on the face of the earth'; and Goodrich-Freer claimed that 'these are perhaps the most unsatisfactory members of the Jewish population, certainly the most dirty and unattractive'.[99] In negative descriptions of Jewish quarters, traveller-writers often specified that the residents most unflatteringly represented were Ashkenazi Jews.

By contrast, Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews were presented as harder workers, more dignified, and less incongruous in the Eastern Mediterranean landscape. In his proto-Zionist pamphlet *The Land of Promise*, Charles Warren envisaged North African Jews populating a colony in Palestine under British custodianship. Claiming that they had 'great love for the northern Europeans' after Britain gave asylum to some Jews on Gibraltar during the 1859-1860 Spanish-Moroccan War, Warren predicted they 'would probably be glad to exchange their present position for work in Palestine. These Jews, poor and wretched as they appear to be, are capable of rapid development, and are inclined to move forward'.[100] Warren's expectations contrast with the actual experiences of North African Jews in the State of Israel. Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) wrote of 'the immigrant from North Africa, who looks like a savage, who has never read a book in his life, not even a religious one, and doesn't even know how to say his prayers', whilst foreign minister Moshe Sharett (1894-1965) added 'we cannot count on the Jews of Morocco to build the country, because they have not been educated for this'.[101]

Oliphant, discussing his plan for a Jewish colony in *The Land of Gilead*, wrote 'it is certainly not among the Jews of Jerusalem that I should look for colonists, with the exception, possibly, of a few among the Sephardim'; the whole body of Ashkenazi

[98] Charles Wilson, "Jerusalem" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 1., 1-120, p. 118
[99] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 333; Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 351; Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, p. 57
[100] Charles Warren, *The Land of Promise; or, Turkey's Guarantee* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1875), pp. 21-22
[101] Joseph Massad, "Zionism's Internal Others: Israel and the Oriental Jews", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Summer 1996), 53-68, p. 56

Jews formed 'a useless mendicant class'.[102] In *Haifa*, Oliphant drew a contrast between a Mizrahi Jew and Ashkenazi Jews during a meeting between Zionist settlers and Palestinians. After a less than flattering description of the European colonists, discussed further below, Oliphant described the Mizrahi Jew at the scene: 'in strange contrast with these Roumanian Jews was the Arab Jew who acted as interpreter – a stout, handsome man, in Oriental garb, as unlike his European coreligionists as the fellahin themselves'. His preference for Eastern Jews *vis-à-vis* European Jews was again apparent when he described Yemenite Jews in Jerusalem:

> I met some of them one afternoon, down at the Place of Wailing, and was much struck by the mild and gentle expression of their countenances. They are reputed to be well versed in their own religious lore, and to be devout without being hypocritical, which is more than can be said for Palestinian Jews generally.[103]

Treves also contrasted Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews at the Western Wall. Treves portrayed one 'very ancient ragged Jew in the crowd who is the embodiment of hopelessness', a European Jew with a 'white and lined' face and 'two thready side-locks'. 'He merely moans as would one who had beaten upon a shut portal for fifty years', Treves wrote of the man's prayers. By contrast, nearby was 'a younger man, a Spanish Jew, well clad, tall, and upright, with a face of great refinement – the face of a visionary'. Implicitly referencing proto-Zionist hopes, Treves asserted that 'it is he, and such as he, who keep alive the spark of hope among the grey and scattered ashes'.[104] These kinds of views may have replicated social attitudes in Britain. Among the British Sephardic community numbered the Montefiores and other semi-aristocratic well-established Jewish families. Ronald Storrs (1881-1955), the British Mandate military governor of Jerusalem in the 1920s, wrote in his memoir that 'in England we had known of the Sephardic or Spanish as the "Noble" Jew'.[105] Meanwhile, particularly after the pogroms of the 1880s, Ashkenazi Jews were associated with the immigrants and refugees from the Russian Empire, concentrated in areas such as East London, and against whom was waged an anti-Semitic press and political campaign, resulting in the Aliens Act.

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[102] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 12, 317
[103] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 12, 311
[104] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 115
[105] Ronald Storrs, *Orientations* (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Limited, 1937) pp. 429-430

Oliphant's representation of the Mizrahi Jews, more akin to the *fellahin* than the Ashkenazi Jews, seemingly at home in Palestine, and hard workers, is significant. This view was replicated by the Zionist movement, which viewed Mizrahim as ideal labourers for the settlement project, potentially replacing Arab Palestinian labour as a step towards a Jewish-only settler society; as Ella Shohat notes, 10,000 Yemeni Jews were bought to Palestine by the Zionist movement for this purpose before 1914.[106]

In other respects, however, there was a break with Western travellers' views of Eastern Jews. During the British Mandate, British and Jewish Zionist officials "orientalised" the Mizrahim, viewing them as an impediment to progress in areas such as hygiene, here often lumped in with the Ashkenazi Orthodox, to whom they had once been favourably contrasted.[107] After the establishment of the State of Israel, secular Ashkenazi Jews, who formed the state's ruling class, gained decisive supremacy over Mizrahim, who were forced to adhere to European cultural habits.[108] The 'mild and gentle' Yemeni Jews of Oliphant, were viewed by Ben-Gurion as 'two thousand years behind us [Ashkenazi Jews], probably more', and lacking 'the most basic and primary concepts of civilisation'.[109] It should also be noted that the views of traveller-writers discussed above were not wholly representative. As Nancy Stockdale notes, British missionaries sometimes wrote negative reports of Sephardi or Mizrahi Jews.[110] Yet travellers' admiration of Eastern Jews began to decline when increasing numbers of Zionist immigrants, largely Ashkenazi Jews, arrived in Palestine, and the New *Yishuv* of pioneer farmers came to outnumber the Old *Yishuv* in which most of the Ashkenazim were Orthodox Jews in the holy cities.

[106] Ella Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Autumn 1999), 5-20, pp. 9, 19
[107] Dafna Hirsch, "'We Are Here to Bring the West, Not Only to Ourselves': Zionist Occidentalism and the Discourse of Hygiene in Mandate Palestine", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (November 2009), 577-594
[108] See Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim", and Massad, "Zionism's Internal Others"
[109] Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1986)
[110] Nancy L. Stockdale, *Colonial Encounters among English and Palestinian Women, 1800-1948* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), p. 126

## III: The Jews and Religion in the Travelogues

This section covers two aspects of traveller-writers' representations of the Jews and religion: firstly, depictions of Jewish worship, particularly at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, in which travellers' attitudes towards Jews and Judaism were often revealed; and traveller-writers' discussions of the Jews' conversion to Christianity.

### III.I: 'A Mere Ceremonial Observance': Representing Jewish Worship

Many traveller-writers displayed great interest in Jewish worship in Palestine, making the effort to witness Jewish religious ceremonies in the holy cities and recording their impressions of them. No trip to Tiberias was seemingly complete without the British traveller viewing a service in a synagogue. Jewish worship was represented as undignified, almost riotous, and characterised by ceremonial displays of fervour. Herschell, formerly a religious Jew, wrote of a service in Tiberias that 'the worship seemed to consist in chanting and bowing, the din being inconceivable. Some of the boys getting at times too uproarious received an admonitory box on the ears'.[111] 'Never did we see a more affecting sight than when we witnessed the worship of the Khasidim [Hassidic Jews] at Tiberias', exclaimed John Wilson in almost shocked tones: 'they roared aloud as if they wished to be heard at Jerusalem, twisted their garments with their hands, stamped with their feet, contorted their faces, and wept most piteously, as if labouring under the greatest mental agony'. Wilson the missionary judged that 'their delusion seemed great, and their importunity for the advent of the Messiah incontrollable'.[112] Writing of Jewish worship in general, Conder described it as 'almost ludicrous, and no one ignorant of the language, would give the worshippers credit for their beautiful and affecting liturgy'.[113] The British Biblical Orientalist could appreciate the 'beautiful and affecting liturgy' of the Jews, who themselves ruined it with undignified practices.

The scene which to all traveller-writers exemplified Jewish worship in Palestine, was the Sabbath worship at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, Judaism's holiest site (fig.

[111] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 210
[112] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, p. 133
[113] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 352

6.2). Travellers were drawn not only by Jewish prayer, but also by the site's relation to the ancient Israelite temples and the ancient Hebrews. In his *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, Andrew Russell wrote that 'perhaps no part of Jerusalem has been rendered more familiar to Europeans, by means of engravings and photographs, than what is called *The Jews' Wailing Place*'.[114] Not only visually but also verbally was the Western Wall rendered familiar, for it was described in every account of Jerusalem. Travellers viewed it as a spectacle they had the right to observe; while some complained that the gathering of an audience damaged the dignity of the sight – Treves, for instance, complained of 'the crowd of tourists […] who giggle and chaff and punctuate the solemn litany by the clicking of their kodaks' – most displayed a striking lack of awareness that their own presence contributed to this.[115] Russell was in the minority in arguing that those in prayer 'ought to have their feelings respected, and that such a spot is not meant for the loitering step of the stranger'.[116]

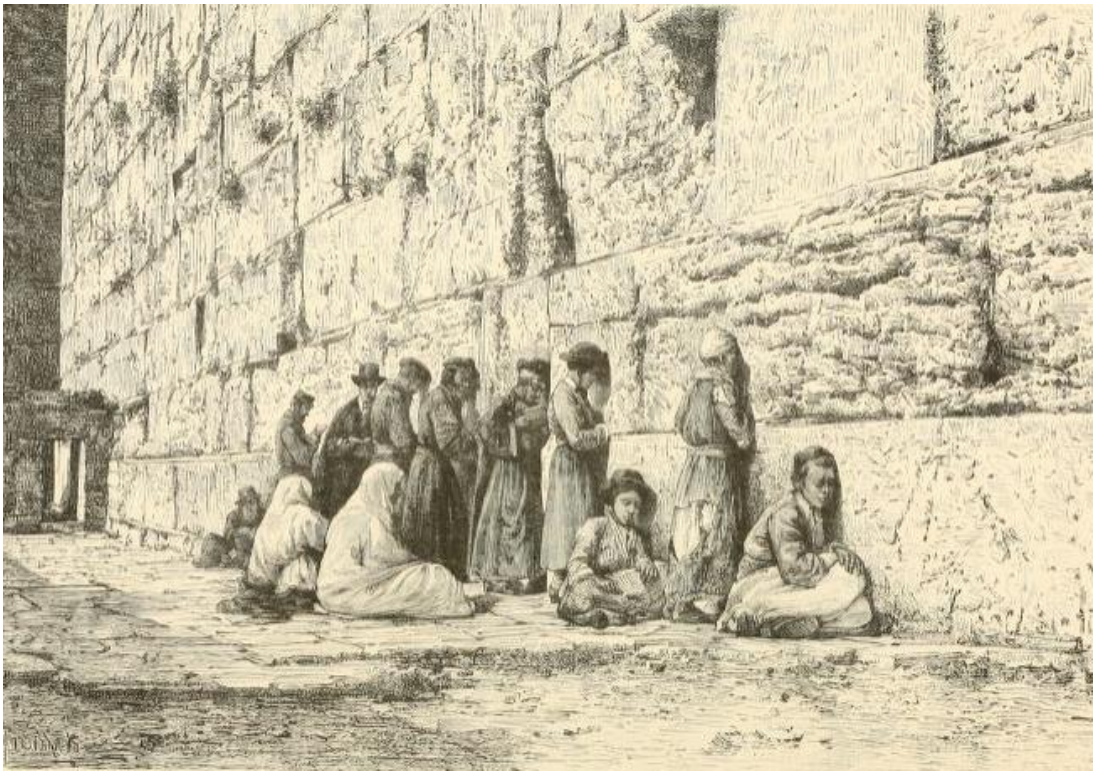

**Figure 6.2:**
**"Jews' Wailing-Place",**
***Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**page 37**

[114] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, pp. 25
[115] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 116
[116] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, p. 26

Loiter most travellers did, their representations of prayer at the Western Wall falling into two camps. To many traveller-writers, the sight stirred thoughts of the heroic Jews' ancestors, and pity for the present state of the Jews in Jerusalem. Jewish worship at the site encouraged travellers to conceptualise Jerusalem solely in terms of Jewish history, with the religious ceremony symbolising an unbroken tradition signifying Jews' right to the city. 'The scene that here presented itself was one of the most striking I beheld in Jerusalem', Herschell wrote. 'Nothing could give a more vivid picture of the humiliation of Israel than these poor Jews, strangers and outcasts in what used to be their own city'.[117] Macleod's imagination drifted across the centuries as he pondered 'that this sort of devotion has probably been going on since the Temple was destroyed'. Watching Jews pray was for Macleod almost a religious experience; he hyperbolically exclaimed 'what light amidst darkness, what darkness amidst light; what undying hopes in the future, what passionate attachment to the past; what touching superstition, what belief and unbelief!'[118] Agnes Smith in her *Eastern Pilgrims* recorded that her guide in Jerusalem, a local Jew, told her that the Jews in prayer at the Western Wall 'ask the Lord to give them back the Holy Land'. Smith recorded that 'it was a most touching sight, and I felt inclined to mingle my tears and prayers with theirs', and her sister who accompanied her expressed her prayer that '"the Lord would soon reveal Himself to them as one greater than the temple"'.[119]

Other traveller-writers focused on the emotions on display, which emphasised Jewish attachment to Jerusalem, but could also make Jews seem insincere or undignified and requiring reform and conversion. Manning depicted the Jews 'uttering loud cries of anguish' and 'their cheeks bathed in tears', and the Wall's stones 'worn smooth with their passionate kisses'. Manning admitted that 'the grief of the new-comers [recent Jewish immigrants] is evidently deep and genuine', though he claimed 'with the older residents it has subsided into little more than a mere ceremonial observance and an empty form'. Manning was not alone in this, nor was he alone in reflecting at the scene that the Jews' position in Palestine was owed to 'the self-invoked curse of eighteen hundred years ago – "His blood be on us, and on our children"', linking the Jews with Christ's death.[120] Porter wrote in *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* similarly of Jews 'bathing' the Wall's stones 'with tears, and all the

[117] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 131
[118] Macleod, *Eastward*, pp. 160-161
[119] Agnes Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims: The Travels of Three Ladies* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870), p. 232
[120] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 115

while sobbing as if their hearts would burst'. Claiming that the religious worship represented a continuum of Jewish national consciousness, Porter asserted that 'eighteen centuries of exile and woe have not dulled their hearts' affections, or deadened their feelings of national devotion'.[121]

Helen B. Harris in her *Pictures of the East* viewed the Wall more sceptically, writing that 'in some of the photographs taken at this place and sold in Jerusalem, the lamenting Jews are shown with their faces turned to the photographer ready to be pictured, which certainly does not add to the impressiveness of the scene', but she noted too that 'when we visited the spot, we noticed much evidence of real feeling along with the more formal wailing'. Harris recorded meeting a Jewish woman to whom she explained 'that as a Christian I also loved the Jewish Temple and all that its history meant'. Like other traveller-writers, Harris drew the link between Jewish national consciousness and worship at the Wall, claiming 'the ancient love of the city of their forefathers, with the memory of the glory of the Temple and its worship, is a passion that still burns in the hearts of this people'.[122]

Some traveller-writers used the scene to evince sympathy for the Jews in Palestine, to argue for their better treatment, or even their "repossession" of Palestine. Thomas Jenner in *That Goodly Mountain and Lebanon*, asserting Jewish ownership of Jerusalem and de-indigenising non-Jewish Jerusalemites, asked 'who can behold the scene before us, and not recognize the city which was for the people, and the people who were for the city? But now strangers inhabit their inheritance, and their houses are turned to aliens'.[123] J.E. Hanauer, similarly wrote in *Walks About Jerusalem* that 'here, bowed in the dust they may at least weep undisturbed over the fallen glory of their race; and bedew with their tears the soil which so many thousands of their forefathers once moistened with their blood'.[124] Arthur Copping in *A Journalist in the Holy Land* averred that the Jewish quarter and the Wall demonstrated 'the tragic destiny of one race of mankind the race that has survived a world-wide hatred and centuries of persecution', and complained that 'Christians enjoy a full latitude in their holy places. Mohammedans, as the rulers, have superb mosques wherever they have been pleased to erect them. But for the Jews there is only a little outside alley to

[121] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), p. 40
[122] Helen B. Harris, *Pictures of the East* (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd, 1897), p. 11
[123] Thomas Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain & Lebanon* (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1873), p. 71
[124] J.E. Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, 1910), pp. 104-105

localize their heritage of glorious memories'.[125] A sense of injustice done towards the Jews in Jerusalem was created by making the prayers at the Western Wall seem not only touching but also degrading, by comparison to the Jews' Biblical past.

Ross wrote of 'travellers who sneer at what they call the mock sentimentalism of the scene'; among this number were certainly some British traveller-writers.[126] A strongly negative representation of the Wall came from Rider Haggard. 'This scene is often described as touching' he began. 'Personally I found it grotesque, even to sadness'. Rider Haggard described those watching the Jews' prayers, the standard characters of the Orientalist account, including the incongruous Westerners of whom he was one:

> beggars, halt, maimed, and disease-stricken; boys, who drew down their eyelids within six inches of your face to reveal the shrivelled balls beneath; men with tins the size of a half-gallon pot, which they shook before you, howling and vociferating for *baksheesh* […]. Then, to complete the picture, in the background a small crowd of European and American sightseers, with their dragomen, some seated on boxes or rough benches, others standing in groups, laughing, smoking, and photographing the more noteworthy characters.

Imagining himself into a Jew's position, Rider Haggard concluded by stating 'were I born to this heritage I had rather make my petition in some rat-haunted cellar such as must be open even to the poorest'.[127] While Rider Haggard's representation of the Western Wall was noteworthy for its denial of any dignity, historical import or sincere emotion, many of these aspects were implicit, sometimes explicit, in the accounts of other travellers. As grandiose as the visions of the ancient temples, national consciousness, and the destiny of the Jewish people were, the overriding impression of the representation of prayer at the Wall was that it was part of the world which Jews needed to leave behind to become worthy of their inheritance.

[125] Arthur E. Copping, *A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), pp. 223-224
[126] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 69
[127] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, pp. 341-342

### III.II: 'It Appears More Likely the Jews Will Convert Them': Representations of Jewish Conversion

The mission to convert the Jews was a key part of Evangelicals' attitude towards Palestine in the nineteenth century. Jewish conversion was part – to Evangelicals, the most important part – of Protestants' mission in Palestine; the first Anglo-Prussian Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem, Michael Solomon Alexander (1799-1845, bishop 1841-1845) was himself a converted Jew. While subsequently more emphasis was placed on proselytising among indigenous Palestinian Christians, the Jews' conversion remained a treasured goal for some. The issue formed a significant component of the representation of the Jews in the travelogues, despite the very small number of conversions which occurred.[128]

While many traveller-writers believed in the "restoration" of the Jews, most were also clear that the Jews, especially those already in Palestine, needed to change before this prophecy was fulfilled. What this meant was their conversion to Evangelical Christianity, and concurrent adoption of a Western lifestyle. This was clear in Thackeray's account of meeting a Jewish convert. In stark contrast to his representations of other Jews in Palestine, Thackeray wrote 'I never saw a man whose outward conduct was more touching, whose sincerity was more evident, and whose religious feeling seemed more deep, real, and reasonable'.[129]

Whilst Jews remained unconverted, travellers sometimes viewed them as being guilty and needing to repent. Kinglake noted his feeling that he 'could not help looking upon the Jews of Jerusalem, as being in some sort the representatives, if not the actual descendants of the rascals who crucified our Saviour'.[130] The need for the Jews' conversion was stated by Neil: 'Israel have not, as a nation, repented. In their hearts they reject King Messiah, and still spit at the mention of that name which bespeaks Him their Saviour. There is no sure or lasting peace out of Christ, and Israel have yet to learn this'. As mentioned above, Neil was enthusiastic about the increasing numbers of Jews in Palestine, viewing their "return" as preceding their conversion; nevertheless, he admitted that 'the Jews, as a nation, have resisted all former attempts to convert them'. Adhering to millenarian eschatology, drawing on the Book of Zechariah, Neil

[128] Alexander Scholch, "Britain in Palestine, 1838-1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy*", Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn 1992), 39-56
[129] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, p. 207
[130] Kinglake, *Eothen*, pp. 230-231

predicted that '*a third part of Israel only will be saved*; "in all the land two parts therein shall be cut off and die." All those in rebellion against Jesus of Nazareth God will purge out of the flock'. Neil identified 'great and revived interest in the Holy Land and the Jews, and specially in missions to Israel', and 'the return of the Jews in unbelief', as 'signs of the time of the end', with 'great tribulation of the Jews in Palestine at the hands of Antichrist' to come.[131]

Despite the small number of conversions, some traveller-writers were optimistic that "progress" might be made. Some prepared themselves to play a part in the mission to the Jews, even while not primarily on missionary duty in Palestine. John Wilson recorded time he spent staying with the Hebron Jews studying Hebrew, and 'endeavoured to commit to memory, the principal passages of the Old Testament, to which I should most likely have occasion to appeal in my discussions with the Jews in their own land'.[132]

Herschell was especially concerned with Jewish conversion. He wrote with enthusiasm that 'the first Sunday I spent in Jerusalem I saw four of my brethren baptized', but had to admit that 'within the last few years there have been fourteen converts from Christianity to Judaism' – a low total. Herschell blamed the poor results of the mission on supposed defects in Christianity in Palestine. Like other Evangelicals, though with unmatched fervour, Herschell railed against on the supposed impact of indigenous Palestinian Christianity on Jewish conversion. Palestinian Christians were accused of oppressing Jews and inculcating anti-Jewish hatred – 'the sons of Zion, instead of being objects of interest and pity, are exposed to the contempt and hatred, not only of the Mohammedan possessors of their city, but of the professors of false Christianity who dwell in it' – and of alienating Jews with their rituals. 'The great and important lesson the Jews ought to be taught is, that Christianity is a spiritual religion; an internal power, regulating the heart and conduct', Herschell wrote – *not* a religion of outward ceremonies, as were non-Protestant sects in his opinion. In asking why so few Jews had converted, Herschell also examined 'the present state of the professing Church of Christ', key, he claimed, to 'the conversion of my brethren, the Jews, to Christianity'. He accused Protestants of adapting themselves to non-Western Christianity's customs, and asked whether anything could

[131] Neil, *Palestine Re-Peopled*, pp. 42, 68-69, 135, 150
[132] John Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 359

> be more grossly absurd than that members of a Protestant church, who go to the East for the express purpose of converting the Jews to Christianity, should seek in any way to assimilate themselves to those corrupt churches, instead of using every endeavor to show them that they are in all respects different from them?[133]

In Herschell's evaluation, the reason why missionaries made so few Jewish converts was that they were not Evangelical enough.

Many traveller-writers admitted failures in the attempt to convert Jews. Observing a missionary in the village of al-Majdal near Tiberias, Tristram recorded that 'the Polish Jews, very numerous here, were willing to listen, and several of them brought money to purchase German New Testaments; but the native Jews, with whom were mingled a few Moslems, were occasionally very violent in their expressions'. He claimed that 'so soon as Christ was declared to have borne our sins, they would stop their ears, and shriek out, like their fathers of old, "He hath spoken blasphemy, blasphemy"'.[134] Thackeray lamented 'the English mission has been very unsuccessful with these religionists', and claimed 'a sort of martyrdom is in store for the luckless Hebrews at Jerusalem who shall secede from their faith'.[135] Several accounts of this were provided in travelogues. Rider Haggard heard from a missionary that 'Jewish converts are very rare and much oppressed; indeed their existence is made almost unbearable'.[136] The reluctance of Jews to convert, and their resentment towards missionaries, partially explain some traveller-writers' negative depiction of the Jews' attachment to their religion. Conder, for instance, described Jews in Palestine as 'fanatical to the last degree', while Ross wrote of 'the fervour of their narrow Jewish faith' and described them as 'indomitable in their bigotry'.[137]

The most telling comment came from Isabel Burton: of missionaries to the Jews, Burton wrote that 'they are all made on the same pattern, as if to order; but the Jews know so very much more than they do, that it appears more likely the Jews will convert them'.[138] Burton touched on the real dynamics of Evangelicals' activities in Palestine. The obsession of Evangelicals with the Jews, which had much more to do with what the Jews could be for the Anglican Church and British Empire rather than

[133] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, pp. 156, 157, 132, 155, 65
[134] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 426-427
[135] Thackeray, *Notes of a Journey*, pp. 205-206
[136] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 230
[137] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 351; Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 240
[138] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, p. 136

with sympathy with Jewish communities around the world, led them to become strong supporters of Jewish settlement in Palestine, increasingly shorn of wholesale Jewish conversion to Christianity as the nineteenth century progressed.

This demonstrated a move towards what Regina Sharif identifies as 'scientific Zionism', in which, while belief in a Jewish claim to Palestine still rested ultimately on the Bible, arguments were phrased in secular terms, such as national rights, Jews' need for a safe haven, and their supposed ability to put the land to better use than the indigenous people.[139] Hanauer's book of Jerusalem walks, published by the London Jews Society, ended on the assertion that Christians should 'work with all our powers and talents for the welfare of the Jerusalem and its people of the present day', and that increasing numbers of Jews in Palestine showed 'the time fast approaching when, according to His gracious and faithful promise, the Lord will "arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come"'.[140] Yet despite this millenarian language, there was no explicit mention of Jewish conversion. While this was still a hoped-for eventuality, it seemed remote by comparison with the Zionist colonisation which was beginning to occur. Biblical concerns were important to David Lloyd George (1863-1945), Prime Minister at the time of the Balfour Declaration – Lloyd George said in a speech of 1925 that 'we had been trained even more in Hebrew history than in the history of our own country' – but in general it was in a new language that British support for Zionism was justified.[141] Falastin Naili summarises this shift as 'the gradual reduction of millenarist ideology (with its strong emphasis on the conversion of Jews as a prerequisite for the Second Coming) to restorationism'.[142]

Another illustration of this is that, by 1880, Oliphant could write that 'it is somewhat unfortunate that so important a political and strategical question as the future of Palestine should be inseparably connected in the public mind with a favourite religious theory', the conversion of the Jews. Oliphant viewed the association of Palestine's colonisation with the Evangelical desire for Jewish conversion as a hindrance:

> The restoration of the Jews to Palestine has been so often urged upon sentimental or Scriptural grounds, that now, when it may possibly

[139] Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 66
[140] Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem*, p. 237
[141] Quoted in Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 182
[142] Falestin Naili, "The Millenarist Settlement in Artas and its support network in Britain and North America, 1845-1878", *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 45 (Spring 2011), 43-56, p. 54

> become the practical and common-sense solution of a great future difficulty, a prejudice against it exists in the minds of those who have always regarded it as a theological chimera, which it is not easy to remove.

He made clear that 'as my own efforts are concerned, they are based upon considerations which have no connection whatever with any popular religious theory upon the subject'.[143] These words were well-perceived by Jews supporting settlement in Palestine, with *The Jewish Chronicle* in January 1880 stating approvingly that Oliphant 'has no religious motives' and that 'Christianity is to him of as little consequence as Judaism' (a charge which Oliphant defended himself against).[144] His public stance against linking colonisation with conversion surely helped Oliphant win the confidence of the early Jewish Zionist movement. The arrival of new Jewish settlers, just as unlikely as the Old *Yishuv* to convert, forced travellers to recognise that the "return" of the Jews was not going to proceed in the way they had previously anticipated. The representation of these early Zionist colonists is the subject of the final section of this chapter.

[143] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. xxxii-xxxiii
[144] Quoted in Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 528-529

## IV: 'A Very Partial Success': Representing Zionism and Zionists

With the start of the First *Aliyah* in the 1880s, travellers came to believe that the "return" of the Jews was not only a hoped-for prophecy, but imminently achievable through Jewish agricultural colonisation. Many reacted positively to this idea. Decades earlier, William Henry Bartlett wrote of Moses Montefiore's 1838 proposal to establish colonies for Jewish immigrants around Safad that 'we can hardly conceive a more admirable enterprise, or one which might work out results of greater moment, not only to the Jews, but other inhabitants of Syria'. Bartlett nevertheless warned of the difficulties posed by 'the unsettled state of the country', 'the ruinous taxes of successive masters' and 'the pillage of robbers'; he predicted the British government would need to 'interfere in a very decided manner for [the colonists'] protection' before 'a new and vastly improved era for Palestine' could begin.[145]

The colonisation of Palestine by Jewish settlers began with the establishment of agricultural colonies or *moshavot* in northern Palestine and the coastal plains. These colonies were populated by Eastern European Jewish supporters of the *Hibbat Tsion* (Hebrew: "Lovers of Zion") movement, whose belief in the settlement of Palestine preceded the political Zionism of the First Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897.[146] This New *Yishuv* increased from around 2000 in 1880, to 30,000 in 1914.[147] Baruch Kimmerling has noted that Zionist historiography has treated the First *Aliyah* as a watershed moment, yet he argues that 'the first wave was the result of a Jewish religious impulse […]. The Zionization of this immigration [by Zionist historiography] deepens the roots of the Zionist movement'.[148] The representation of the immigrants and colonies of the First *Aliyah* in the travelogues may shed light upon this. Did British travellers, largely sympathetic to proto-Zionist ideas, believe themselves to be in the presence of such a significant development?

Many travellers who visited Palestine from the 1880s to 1914 noted the appearance of the colonies and a new class of Jewish immigrants. Several traveller-writers welcomed the colonies for ideological reasons. They approved that the new arrivals were uninterested in the *chalukah* lifestyle of subsistence in the impoverished

[145] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, p. 190
[146] For the development of the early Zionist colonies, see Yossi Katz, "Agricultural Settlements in Palestine, 1882-1914", *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 1/2 (Winter 1988 - Spring 1992), 63-82
[147] Ruppin, "Twenty-Five Years of Palestine", p. 209
[148] Baruch Kimmerling, "Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Case of Israeli-Jewish Historiography", *History and Memory*, Vol. 7, No. 1, "Israeli Historiography Revisited" (Spring/Summer 1995), 41-65, p. 50

Jewish quarters, and were instead working the "desolate" land. 'With the increasing demand for land for Jewish colonists, the Plain of Gennesareth cannot much longer remain the luxuriant wilderness it is at present', wrote Ross of land near the Sea of Galilee. He nevertheless admitted 'these agricultural colonists are not numerous; their significance lies in the fact that Jews are beginning to settle on the land in Palestine, and not merely in the cities'.[149]

Writing after the emergence of political Zionism, Goodrich-Freer displayed an acquaintance with major Zionist ideologues Herzl, Max Nordau and Israel Zangwill in *Inner Jerusalem*. Instead of viewing the colonies as new phenomena, Goodrich-Freer thus framed them as a 'valuable adjunct' to the old charitable bodies which had tried to encourage the Jews of the Old *Yishuv* to farm, though she approvingly recorded that 'to ordinary agricultural work extending over at least 70,000 acres of land, the colonists have now added such occupations as floriculture, perfume distilleries, soap-making, apiculture, cattle-breeding, fruit-preserving, tobacco-growing, silk-worm cultivation, wine-making and poultry-keeping'. Goodrich-Freer anticipated a transformative future role for the colonies:

> If numerical superiority be a criterion of possession, and achievement a measure of power; if the higher civilization be that of the more effective philanthropy, and true part and lot in the soil be that of him who restores it to cultivation; then, mysterious as may seem to us the workings of God's providence, the deep tragedy of their existence, the dark problem of their destiny, is approaching solution, and Jerusalem is for the Jews.[150]

Not all traveller-writers had such faith in the Zionist colonies. Perhaps because of settlers' unwillingness to become "Hebrew Christians", Ross expressed doubt over the Zionist enterprise; claiming that Palestine's 'part in the world's history has already been played', Ross argued that 'artificial restorations of [Palestine's] prosperity at the bidding of mere sentiment, or to force the hand of Providence in bringing about what is supposed to be the fulfilment of Old Testament predictions', could not be squared with Christian doctrine, or be expected to succeed.[151] Kelman provided a very sceptical evaluation of the settlements. After writing that 'no one can read pleadings

[149] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 125, 239
[150] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, pp. 55, 58-59, 74
[151] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 255-256

such as Zangwill's without sympathy with the ideal of a Palestine once more inhabited by its ancient people', going through the usual philo-Semitic motions of asserting 'this extraordinary race is capable of almost anything' and discoursing at length on 'how much Christians owe to Jews', Kelman strongly attacked the colonies:

> It must be confessed that the appearances are hardly promising. The Jews are steadily gathering in Palestine, and vast sums of Jewish money have been spent on their behalf. But […] a Jew, subsidised on the sole condition of remaining in the land and being a Jew, seems to degenerate at once into a worthless and even a noxious parasite. Nor have the attempts to organise Jewish agriculture and manufacture in Syria been attended as yet with more than a very partial success.[152]

Kelman's likened Zionist immigrants with *chalukah*-receiving Jews: both, in Kelman's account, 'degenerate at once into a worthless and even a noxious parasite'. Kelman's obliviousness to the retrospective significance attached to the hardy and hardworking pioneer Zionist farmer – antithesis of the fatalistic unreformed Jew of the Old *Yishuv* – in Israeli national mythology, is stark.

Noticeable in all these accounts is the distance between the traveller-writers and the new settlers. The travellers wrote *about* the colonies and the colonists, but they did not describe them in any significant detail, with a less clear picture of the colonists emerging than of the Old *Yishuv*. While supporting the idea Jewish colonisation, travellers largely ignored its actual practice. There is little evidence in most of the travelogues that their authors visited the new colonies, most of their knowledge of colonies having a second-hand air compared to their observations of other locations in Palestine. They continued to visit the holy cities of Judaism and denigrate the Jewish quarters, and the towns and villages inhabited by Palestinian Muslims and Christians, complain about how much reduced they were from the days of the Bible, and to express their support for the "return" of the Jews. But for very few did the Zionist colonies form part of the itinerary, unlike the frequently visited German colonies. By contrast, whilst in Palestine Herzl visited a string of Jewish settlements between Jaffa and Jerusalem, including Rishon LeZion, 'Rehovot and Motza, which he described in his diaries with much more immediacy than most British travellers' accounts, which mainly did not even identify any of the settlements by name.[153]

[152] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, pp. 283-284
[153] Patai (ed.), *Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, vol. 2, pp. 739-758

A very rare exception to the erasure of the Zionist colonies is found in a short book *Palestine and the Jews; Or the Zionist Movement an Evidence that the Messiah Will Soon Appear in Jerusalem to Rule the Whole World Therefrom* by Frank Jannaway (1859-1935). The London-born Jannaway, a prominent figure in the Christadelphian sect which highly supported Zionism, toured Palestine on the eve of the First World War specifically to visit Zionist settlements, and he provided glowing but brief reports of the 'Jewish colonies or ghettoes' (the latter hardly a term which Zionist immigrants themselves would have used) outside Jerusalem, 'Tel Abib', Petah Tikva, Rishon LeZion and Rosh Pina. However, as demonstrated by the subtitle of his work as well as its contents, Jannaway continued to adhere very overtly to a millennial eschatology long after it had declined among the "mainstream" of Palestine travellers and Protestantism in Britain, relegating his book to the fringes. Jannaway viewed Zionism exclusively through the frame of prophecy, asserting 'the migration of the Jews to Canaan, which has been for some years, and is still, going on, is an absolute fulfilment of those prophecies concerning the Jew and his land just prior to the return to the earth of his Messiah'.[154] *Palestine and the Jews* was published by the Christadelphians themselves, and would primarily have been of interest to members of the small unorthodox sect. Moreover, even in this work the present reality of the colonies was outweighed by Biblical quotations and episodes from ancient history.

In 1917, Albert Montefiore Hyamson published his *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, containing detailed reports of several Zionist colonies. His non-Jewish compatriots were largely unwilling to write in detail on the topic, which Hyamson touched upon in his preface. While 'every visitor on his return from the Holy Land considers it his duty to narrate for the benefit of the public his impressions and experiences', meaning that 'the literature of modern Palestine seems without end', Hyamson claimed that 'there is a sameness about its content that renders it depressingly monotonous'. He explained further:

> All travellers seem to have followed the same paths, to have visited the same shrines and the same sites, to have followed religiously in the footsteps of their predecessors, to have undergone much the same experiences, and to have recounted the same story, even though in

[154] Frank G. Jannaway, *Palestine and the Jews; Or the Zionist Movement an Evidence that the Messiah Will Soon Appear in Jerusalem to Rule the Whole World Therefrom* (Birmingham: C.C. Walker, 1914), pp. 28, 49, 52, 66, 70

> different words. Seldom is it that a traveller or writer steps off the well-worn high road.[155]

What Hyamson was complaining about, was travellers' failure to devote sufficient coverage to the Zionist enterprise. For example, even in the (misleadingly titled) article "Jewish Colonies in Palestine" by Conder, writing a decade into the First *Aliyah*, the Zionist colonies were touched upon only fleetingly. While Conder wrote of the 'influx of Jewish population' into Palestine, and noted approvingly that the settlers had 'raised long streets of houses where there was once nothing but rock to be seen', he devoted more words to ancient Jewish history and the position of Jews in Britain, than the efforts of the settlers. The only settlement he identified by name was an agricultural colony established for Jews by Evangelical Christian missionaries, and even that he labelled with the Arabic name of the adjacent Palestinian village Artuf, rather than the Hebrew equivalent Hartuv.[156]

A passage illustrative of the distance between travellers and settlers comes in Treves's travelogue. Treves arrived after the Jaffa to Jerusalem railway made this journey the work of several hours rather than two days on horseback, and precluded many Western visitors from a more intimate experience of this part of Palestine. Treves recorded the train's passing a Zionist colony, between him and which there was both literal and symbolic distance:

> A friendly dragoman points to a clump of trees on the right of the line among and around which are a few modern buildings. He says that this is the Jewish Agricultural Colony of Akir, and adds mechanically that Akir is the surviving representative of Ekron, the famous city of the Philistines, and concludes by muttering 'Joshua thirteen three,' as if he were giving the telephone number of the place.[157]

Noticeable is Treves's cursory treatment of the 'few modern buildings' of the colony. Having had only a brief glimpse of the settlement from the train, Treves nevertheless did not seem overly curious or regretful that he could not 'step off the well-worn high road', contrasting with the way which traveller-writers' imaginations were fired by Biblical landscapes and Palestinian towns. Treves related to the new colony in terms of its Biblical past, as travellers commonly did with Palestinian villages. Treves and his

[155] Albert M. Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 1917), p. viii
[156] Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", pp. 857, 861
[157] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, pp. 27-28

dragoman also misnamed the colony. 'Aqir was the name of the existing Muslim village, not the colony, founded in 1883 as Ekron (a name which Treves relegated to antiquity); yet Ekron itself was renamed in 1887, decades before Treves's journey, to Mazkeret Batya.[158] Treves likened the new settlement to the city of the ancient Philistines, the enemies of those whom traveller-writers saw as the precursors of modern Jews and the ideal model for Jewish colonists, the Israelites. Treves described ancient Ekron as a troubled place. 'There was never peace in Ekron, and so it is that the old chronicles have much to tell of the part it played in a border war that saw many generations come and go', he wrote, obscuring the existing colony in favour of the ancient site, and perhaps casting a negative light over the prospects of the modern settlers.[159]

Goodrich-Freer provided a rare representation of some Zionist settlers in her *In a Syrian Saddle*. Mentioning 'a new colony farther south' than Tiberias (she provided no further details), she recounted that 'a Jewish family […] accompanied us for some distance on their way to the colony'. Goodrich-Freer's description of the immigrants posed them as a dishevelled band, with none of the attendant heroism or romance which might be expected from a writer who expressed sympathy with Zionism:

> The mother, grasping an infant, was perilously balanced upon the top of the family bedding, beneath which the legs of a mule were barely visible; while an older child, of perhaps three, hung in a wooden box, accompanied by several gas-tins, on one side of a donkey, balanced on the other by the family wardrobe.

Goodrich-Freer seemed more interested in watching their donkey search for 'specially tempting thistles' than further describing the would-be colonists.[160]

The most sustained representation of Zionist settlers is found in Oliphant's writings, though he still displayed a distance from the colonists. In *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant recorded the attitude of Jews in Palestine to the idea of a Jewish settler colony. Oliphant had to admit that he

> found so strong a belief prevailing that a second deliverance was at hand, more or less miraculous in its character, that I scarcely liked to intrude upon this occasion with the extremely prosaic and mundane idea

[158] Alan Dowty, *Arabs and Jews in Ottoman Palestine: Two Worlds Collide* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), p. 110
[159] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 28
[160] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, pp. 306-307

> of a colony which should be based rather upon commercial than upon religious considerations.

In other words, most of the Jews Oliphant met on his first visit to Palestine were uninterested in Zionism's basic premises. Nevertheless, he went on to claim that 'various Jews in Palestine and Syria' to whom he had posed his project 'regarded it with favour, provided that they were not themselves intrusted with the entire administration of the affairs of the colony in the first instance, as they were utterly wanting in experience'.[161] Oliphant encountered either complete indifference, or at best noncommittal support, towards Jewish colonisation, just two years before the First *Aliyah* began.

Oliphant's *Haifa*, a collection of his letters to the *New York Sun* from late 1882 to late 1885, covered the First *Aliyah*'s formative years, during which Oliphant raised funds to ensure the success of the early Zionist colonies. Oliphant's attitudes to the Zionist colonists changed significantly over this time, shown by a close reading of his language. In a December 1882 letter entitled "A Jewish Colony in its Infancy", he covered the establishment of Zikhron Ya'akov (not named in the letter) south of Haifa by Romanian members of *Hibbat Tsion*. Despite his ideological support for the colonists – he applauded their '*bona fide* attempt to change the habits of their lives and engage in agricultural pursuits' – an ambivalent attitude was revealed in his account of the settlers' meeting with local Palestinians (the context for his comparison between the Mizrahi Jew and Ashkenazi settlers). Oliphant explained that local Palestinian farmers had been retained 'as laborers and co-partners in the cultivation of the soil' by the colonists, 'until the new-comers shall have become sufficiently indoctrinated in the art of agriculture to be able to do for themselves', the practice of all the early Zionist settlements. In a long passage, indicative of traveller-writers' marginalisation of the immigrants of the New *Yishuv*, Oliphant contrasted the indigenous *fellahin* with the settlers:

> It would be difficult to imagine anything more utterly incongruous than the spectacle thus presented – the stalwart fellahin, with their wild, shaggy, black beards, the brass hilts of their pistols projecting from their waistbands, their tasselled kufeihas drawn tightly over their heads and girdled with coarse black cords, their loose, flowing abbas, and sturdy

[161] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, p. 316

> bare legs and feet; and the ringleted, effeminate-looking Jews, in caftans reaching almost to their ankles, as oily as their red or sandy locks, or the expression of their countenances – the former inured to hard labor on the burning hillsides of Palestine, the latter fresh from the Ghetto of some Roumanian town, unaccustomed to any other description of exercise than that of their wits, but already quite convinced that they knew more about agriculture than the people of the country, full of suspicion of all advice tendered to them, and animated by a pleasing self-confidence which I fear the first practical experience will rudely belie.

The *fellahin*, though 'wild' and 'shaggy', were also 'stalwart' and 'sturdy', 'inured to hard labor', and able to defend themselves; essentially, manly, wholesome, and accustomed to the landscape. This was everything travellers and Zionist ideologues thought Jewish colonists *should* be. However, in Oliphant's account those colonists were 'ringleted' and 'effeminate', with 'oily' clothes, hair and even facial expressions (a throwback to the allegation of Jewish uncleanliness), and 'unaccustomed to any other description of exercise than that of their wits', i.e. cunning and unused to socially useful enterprise, and unattractively self-confident over their minimal agricultural knowledge. Oliphant's early description of the Zionist arrivals was almost entirely negative and sceptical regarding their future chances.[162]

Oliphant was more optimistic in subsequent letters. He described a visit to Rosh Pina in the northern Galilee, with its colonists 'hard at work on their potato-patches', and its 'sixteen neat little houses'. Oliphant wrote he 'was pleased to find evidences of thrift and industry', and claimed that 'altogether this is the most hopeful attempt at a colony which I have seen in Palestine'. Nonetheless, Oliphant's description of Rosh Pina was still superficial, and there remained a note of caution in describing the settlement as only an 'attempt' at colonisation. Also noteworthy was Oliphant's assertion that 'the Moslem villagers, of whom twenty families remained', the inhabitants of the nearby al-Ja'una village, 'lived on terms of perfect amity with the Jews'.[163] The expectation of friendly coexistence between indigenous Palestinians and Zionist settlers was present in Zionist thought until the 1920s, noticeable in Herzl's

[162] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 12-16
[163] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 71

1902 novel *Altneuland* and Ben-Gurion's belief that the *fellahin* would view the settlers as allies against the Palestinian elite.[164]

This obscured the actual situation of poor relations and violent clashes between settlers and Palestinians from the First *Aliyah* onwards; in Rosh Pina in December 1882 (shortly before Oliphant's article), after colonists shot dead a Palestinian, the settlement was attacked by locals. While al-Ja'una's villagers, viewing the settlers as falling under their protection, intervened to diffuse the tension, Oliphant's characterisation of settler-indigenous relations as 'perfect amity' was an obscuration of native resistance increasingly faced by the colonies.[165] One traveller-writer who anticipated such a clash between the settlers and the indigenous population was Marmaduke Pickthall. In his introduction to *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land*, Pickthall noted that 'a vast majority of the large and growing Jewish population are immigrants of the last fifty years, borne to Palestine on the waves of the Zionist movement, and looking about them surlily, with foreign eyes'. As might be expected, given Pickthall's later conversion to Islam, he displayed a preference for the indigenous Palestinian society, asserting that 'the Jew is now a foreigner in the Holy Land; and the standpoint and posture of his ancestors of the time of Christ to-day is found with the Moslem, who also claims descent from Abraham'.[166]

In later correspondence, Oliphant continued to be more upbeat about the colonies whilst highlighting another source of difficulty. Drawing on the long-established discourse of the Ottomans impeding progress (i.e. Western colonisation and settler colonialism) in Palestine, Oliphant complained about obstacles Ottoman control posed to the Zionists. He returned to Zichron Ya'akov, reporting in October 1884 that he 'was pleased to find the colony in a thriving condition, the colonists hopeful, industrious, and contented, the crops promising fairly, and their progress only checked by the refusal of the government to allow them to build permanent dwellings'. Oliphant hoped that the settlers would triumph with 'a judicious display of firmness and patience'. The Zionist colonists were more positively represented, but still only cursorily; Oliphant took an approving though detached bird's-eye view of the colonies,

[164] Joseph Massad, "Against Self-Determination", *Humanity Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 2018), 161-191, p. 178
[165] Dowty, *Arabs and Jews in Ottoman Palestine*, p. 132
[166] Marmaduke Pickthall, "Introduction" in J.E. Hanauer, *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1907), xi-xix, p. xviii

rather than one from street level, as traveller-writers had of the Jewish quarters with their visceral descriptions.

In June 1885, Oliphant reported on colonies around Jaffa in a letter entitled "Progress Even in Palestine", in which he claimed

> So far as energy, industry, and aptitude for agricultural pursuits are concerned, the absence of which has always been alleged as the reason why no Jewish colony could succeed, the experience of more than two years has now proved that such apprehensions are groundless, and that with a fair chance Jews make very good colonists […]

Contradicting his earlier positive appraisal of the indigenous *fellahin*, Oliphant wrote of 'the helpless ignorance and ingrained indolence of the native fellahin, who are their [the settlers'] only rivals here'.[167] Oliphant became more optimistic after most of the colonies survived their first few years; however, for the *New York Sun*'s readership he continued to describe in greater detail his searches for ancient ruins and life in a Druze village than the activities of the settlers.

One piece of evidence suggests a return of Oliphant's scepticism towards the Zionist colonies in the last months of his life. Based on an interviews with Oliphant in the United States on his final visit there in summer 1888, a writer for the American newspaper the *Jewish Messenger* reported that while Oliphant was 'as enthusiastic as ever as to the feasibility of colonization', he had 'altered his views as to the *present* expediency of the project under existing conditions'. The uneven successes of the colonies, and perhaps the settler-indigenous conflict, apparently had led him to believe in a halt to Zionist activities in Palestine, which had had 'a disquieting effect, apart from being wholly useless'. Summarising Oliphant's new views, the reporter wrote that 'he is strongly opposed to sending money to aid existing Palestine colonies, or to found new ones, until the Eastern question is finally settled, and political and economic problems are satisfactorily solved'.[168] In other words, there would have to be a seismic shift in Palestine's circumstances, such as happened in 1917 and 1948, in order for Zionist colonisation to reach the proportions which Oliphant envisaged for it.

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[167] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 191, 286
[168] A.S.I., "With Mr. Oliphant", *Jewish Messenger* (20 July 1888), p. 5

The early Zionist settlers were not totally erased in the travelogues, but traveller-writers, even their greatest supporter Oliphant, were reticent to represent them. A scantier portrait of the Jewish settlers emerges from the travelogues than of the Old *Yishuv* and indigenous Palestinians. While traveller-writers for decades extolled the "return" of the Jews, some supporting agricultural settler colonisation as the way to achieve it, there was a lack of enthusiasm for representing it when it began. There is no easy explanation for this, which also seems to contradict the close relationship which British Mandate officials had with the Zionist movement in the early years of the Mandate. Yet if Derrida's assertion that 'there is nothing outside of the text' is accepted, possible reasons can be found.[169] The relative lacuna where more substantial representation of early Zionist settler colonialism could be found, itself speaks volumes.

Perhaps British travellers felt somewhat confronted by the Zionist colonies. For so long the "return" of the Jews to Palestine had been linked to Jewish conversion to Christianity, and had been envisaged as taking place under British protection; the establishment of Jewish colonies without any of this may have left travellers slightly nonplussed. The colonies in reality were not as heroic as they had been in Evangelicals' imaginations, they required cooperation with local Palestinian farmers – who were, it had to be admitted, better agriculturists than the settlers – and despite working on the pioneer settlements, the colonists continued to remind travellers of the grimy Jews of the Jewish quarters. Many travellers were sceptical over the colonies' survival, and whether they represented anything significant for Palestine's future.

Perhaps, also, most non-Jewish travellers' perception of Jews as "other" prevented them from visiting and describing the Zionist colonies in their travelogues as fully as the German Templar colonies, populated by familiar European Protestants. Zionist settlers were indeed doubly "other", not only Jewish but also defying some of the old modes of representation which travellers could comfortably slip into when describing the Old *Yishuv*. Jewish visitors to Palestine, like Herzl and Hyamson, felt comfortable visiting and writing about Jewish colonies. Non-Jewish travellers such as Treves were content to note them as they passed them by, describing them in brief terms in detached language.

[169] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 158

Finally, the Zionist settlements, though Jewish colonies had been long-hoped-for, challenged travellers' deeply ingrained belief in Palestine as a backward and static part of the Orient. Despite their desire to see Jewish farming, to travellers the new colonies seemed out of place on Palestinian soil. To some travellers too, however, the arrival of the Zionists raised questions about indigeneity versus settler claims, and the possibility of future conflict. This was evident to the Scottish Bible scholar George Adam Smith (1856-1942) in his 1918 *Syria and the Holy Land*. Smith asked 'how do Zionists propose to preserve the legal rights and secure the social health of the *fellahin*, or to prevent the continuation of that process of buying and crushing them out of their communal property, by which so many have already been reduced to the position of serfs?', and recognised 'it is not true that "Palestine is the national home of the Jewish people and of no other people"'.[170] Smith was rare amongst his contemporaries, who shied away from this question and fell back on their stock images of ignorant peasants in the countryside villages and feeble Jews in the Jewish quarters, archetypes which had been with them before they ever set foot in Palestine.

[170] George Adam Smith, *Syria and the Holy Land* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918), pp. 52, 56

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## 'A Multiplicity of Antagonistic Races': The Representation of Minorities

This chapter, the final investigating travellers' representations of the Palestinian people, focuses upon depictions of social and religious minorities. Primarily relating to Palestine as a Judeo-Christian sacred space, and forced to confront Islam and Palestine's majority-Muslim population, travellers' attention was also attracted to smaller minority groups. In light of the divergent characteristics travellers assigned to the communities of the three major Abrahamic faiths, described in the above three chapters, a focus on the smaller minorities allowed travellers to represent the Eastern Mediterranean region as even further divided and lacking in a unifying identity. As the American missionary William McClure Thomson (1806-1894), author of the highly successful travelogue *The Land and the Book*, proclaimed:

> No other country in the world, I presume, has such a multiplicity of antagonistic races; and herein lies the greatest obstacle to any general and permanent amelioration and improvement in their condition, character, and prospects. They can never form one united people, never combine for any important religious or political purpose; and will therefore remain weak, incapable of self-government, and exposed to the invasions and oppressions of foreigners. Thus it has been, is now, and must long continue to be – a people divided, meted out, and trodden down.[1]

British travellers applied categories used across the British Empire to minority communities. Some were conceptualised as "martial races", of possible use as allies to a colonial occupation, whereas others were seen as vulnerable and in need of Britain's protection.[2] This chapter analyses travellers' representations of three minority groups in Palestine: the Bedouin, the Druze and the Samaritans.

[1] William McClure Thomson, *The Land and the Book; or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land.* (Edinburgh: T. Nelson and Sons, 1859), p. 169
[2] For British use of 'martial races' in India, see Pradeep Barua, "Inventing Race: The British and India's Martial Races," *The Historian*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Autumn, 1995), 107-116

## I: 'Children of the Desert': Representing the Bedouin

The Bedouin of Palestine, often referred to by travellers simply as 'Arabs', shared the Islamic faith of the majority of the *fellahin*. Bedouin (fig. 7.1) were found across Palestine, from the Galilee in the north, to the coastal plain, the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea region, and the Naqab Desert in the south, as well the Sinai Desert and east of the Jordan where some Palestine travellers also journeyed. Not a religious minority, and speaking the same Arabic language as other Palestinians, they were nevertheless viewed as a socially, and often even racially, distinct group by Western travellers.

**Figure 7.1:**
**"Arabs of the Adwan Tribe, Valley of the Jordan",**
***"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**facing page 66**

Western travellers' propensity for the open spaces of the Palestinian countryside, meant many came into close contact with Bedouin, whom they sometimes employed as guides and guards in remote and supposedly dangerous areas. Travellers of a romantic Orientalist turn of mind imagined parallels between the Bedouin and

themselves, free peripatetic wanderers in the desert landscape. Isabel Burton, for instance, wrote in *The Inner Life of Syria* of her 'horror of the common groove, of the cab-shafts of civilization, of the contamination of cities, of the vulgarities of life', and corresponding 'yearn[ing] for the desert to recover the purity of my mind and the dignity of human nature – to be regenerated amongst the Arabs'.[3] Such was the aura of adventure surrounding the Bedouin, that Alexander Boddy in his *Days in Galilee* could express his desire to be kidnapped by 'the Arab thieves', as 'it would at least be interesting' and 'enable us to write a chapter, "How we were captured by Bedawîn"'.[4] Yet attitudes towards the Bedouin were complex, informed not only by romanticism, but also by Biblical beliefs, negative tropes, and fear, linked explicitly or implicitly to Palestine's hoped-for colonisation.

British travellers often arrived in Palestine with a predetermined image of the Bedouin. As Sari J. Nasir has demonstrated, the Western concept of "the Arab" was developed over centuries until the 1800s, with images of the Crusader-era "Saracens", Orientalist exploration narratives celebrating the nobility of the Arabian Desert nomads, and the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. Travellers' accounts often drew a well-defined distinction between "true Arabs", believed to be migrants from the Arabian Peninsula rather than indigenous to the Eastern Mediterranean regions they traversed, and the *fellahin*. This was usually to the advantage of the Bedouin and the detriment of the settled peasantry.[5]

Palestine travelogues were no exception to this discourse. For instance, Claude Reignier Conder in *Tent Work in Palestine* took pains to emphasise that the Bedouin and *fellahin* were 'quite separate branches of the Semitic people, and they themselves acknowledge the distinction'. He contrasted these 'quite separate branches' at some length, claiming that 'the Bedawîn are immensely superior to the peasantry in politeness and quietness of manner', and that 'life in the country of the Arabs is really nearer civilisation, in many respects, than that among the villagers'. Whilst the Bedouin were 'mere unlettered and ignorant savages', Conder wrote, 'they have a system of patriarchal government, a code of laws, morals, and habits of hospitality and courtesy,

[3] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 1, p. 2
[4] Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 195
[5] Sari J. Nasir, *The Arabs and the English* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1976), pp. 18-117

which represents and rude kind of civilisation, surpassing in many respects that of the peasantry, whom they despise'.[6]

Travellers divided Muslims in Palestine into rigid categories of settled versus nomadic, cultivators versus herders, "true" indigenous Palestinians or Syrians and "true" Arabs. Whilst admiring the Bedouin, Conder also emphasised 'the antiquity of the Fellah race, contrasted with the more modern settlers [the Bedouin] who have encroached on their territory', while Ada Goodrich-Freer wrote in her *Inner Jerusalem* of 'the indigenous race of the country, compared with whom the Arab is a mere mushroom'.[7] Being seen as recent arrivals and de-territorialised nomads with ancestral ties to regions further east and south left the Bedouin vulnerable to attempts at de-indigenisation them; as Elias Sanbar notes, the admiration for the Bedouin felt by many travellers may have been due to 'the great virtue to [the Bedouins'] admirers (quite ignorant of the real Bedouins' lives) of not claiming any territory'.[8] For settler movements, nomadic indigenous people (or groups which, while actually sedentary agriculturalists, can be claimed as nomadic by the settler power) have been exploited for the opportunity to present part or all of the indigenous population as 'unsettled' and 'rootless', as Patrick Wolfe has explained, and to thus strengthen the settlers' claim to land. Wolfe notes that the Zionist 'new Jew [i.e. settler-agriculturist]'s formative Other was the Bedouin'.[9] Travellers' emphasis on the figure of the Bedouin, whether negatively as a parasitic, unproductive raider, or positively as a romantic warrior, served implicitly to reinforce the notion that Palestinian land awaited the Jews. This resulted in calls from travellers for the expulsion of Bedouin from Palestine, and later colonial attempts to forcibly settle or expel Bedouin communities by the British Mandate authorities and the State of Israel.

Many travellers extravagantly expressed their admiration for the Bedouin, frequently imbuing them with the characteristics of the 'Noble Savage', applied during the Enlightenment to the indigenous people of North America, but applicable to any "uncivilised" non-Western people seemingly demonstrating "natural" virtuous

[6] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), p. 336, 113, 263
[7] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 340; Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), p. 47
[8] Elias Sanbar, "The Invention of the Holy Land," in Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 292-296, p. 296
[9] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native", *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006), 387-409, p. 396

qualities.[10] Alexander Kinglake in *Eothen* admired 'the Arab superbly stalking under his striped blanket, that hung like royalty upon his stately form'.[11] Josias Leslie Porter in his *Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine* praised the 'principle of honour in the breast of the wild "son of the desert" which we seek for in vain beneath the silken robe of the citizen'.[12] Multiple travellers wrote of the Bedouin reputation for hospitality, which they drew from not only their personal experiences, but also Old Testament parables of the Bedouins' supposed ancient forebears, and the *Arabian Nights*. Andrew Russell in his *Glimpses of Eastern Cities* claimed that 'no matter who the wayfarer may be who seeks food and shelter, if only he repairs to the tent of a Bedouin sheikh he will seldom, if ever, be sent empty away'. This led Russell to proclaim that 'so far as morality is concerned […] they will, I believe, in some respects compare favourably with many professing Christians at home'.[13] Portraying the Bedouin as living lives of chivalry, modesty, simplicity and sobriety, travellers were in fact listing the qualities which they thought exemplified Protestant Britain and gentlemanly virtues at the service of Empire.[14]

Whereas the *fellahin* appeared to travellers as a faceless mass, Bedouin were frequently portrayed as individuals with strong personalities, particularly tribal leaders and members of travellers' escorts who could be observed over extended periods of time. Most of the very few Palestinians to be named and properly characterised in the travelogues were Bedouin; sometimes they appeared in several travelogues. One of these was a 'Sheikh Goblan', leader of the 'Adwan tribe, who into his battle-scarred old age still escorted travellers east of the Jordan. Descriptions of Goblan exemplified both travellers' positive and negative associations with the Bedouin. Henry Baker Tristram in *The Land of Israel* claimed that while Goblan was 'said to have more red-handed murders to answer for than any man in the country' and was 'grimy and filthy in appearance', he was also 'an admirable cicerone', with 'a keen appreciation himself of the beauties of a landscape, and a thorough knowledge of the country'. The 'Adwan,

[10] See C.L. Higham, *Noble Savages and Wretched Indians: Protestant Missionaries to the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2000), pp. 31-36
[11] Alexander W. Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen: or, Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), p. 244
[12] Josias Leslie Porter, *A Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine; Including an Account of the Geography, History, Antiquities, and Inhabitants of these Countries, the Peninsula of Sinai, Edom, and the Syrian Desert; with Detailed Descriptions of Jerusalem, Petra, Damascus, and Palmyra.* (London: John Murray, 1868 [1858]), Volume 1, p. 6
[13] Andrew Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities Past and Present. Lectures Delivered on Sunday Evenings in Leslie Parish Church* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1890), pp. 74, 80
[14] See Jeffery Dyer, "Desert Saints or Lions Without Teeth? British Portrayals of Bedouin Masculinity in the Nineteenth-Century Arabian Peninsula", *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 2009), 85-97

Tristram averred, 'proved themselves in every respect what they claim to be – the nobles of the desert'.[15] Two decades later, Conder in his *Heth and Moab* wrote of Goblan that, despite his 'his grasping desire for ever a little more money, and his covetous craving for everything I possessed', he 'could not but feel a respect and liking for this aged ruffian'. Conder praised Goblan as 'the best guide I ever met' and 'a perfect gentleman'.[16] While a British traveller Gray Hill, who included many observations of his guides in regions east of the Jordan in his *With the Beduins*, recorded Goblan's death a few years later – possibly during a confrontation with his enemy the Ottoman government – he described the new 'Adwan leader Ali Diab as resembling 'some mediæval warrior king, stern, even ruthless, accustomed to command and yet be obeyed, and yet capable of generous acts. Many are the stories of his fights and adventures'.[17] Such epithets were never applied to individuals of the *fellahin* – indeed, travellers were barely capable of realising members of the *fellahin* as individuals.

Biblical belief also played a part in travellers' interest in the Bedouin. 'If among the peasantry we find a vivid picture of the life and customs of that later period' Conder reasoned, 'it is from the Bedawîn that we learn most that can throw light on the Patriarchal times, and on the life of Abraham and of his immediate descendants'. As with the *fellahin*, travellers believed the Bedouin represented an authentic historical fragment from Biblical times, barely having changed since – as Orientals people, almost incapable of change. 'Except in the use of tobacco and gunpowder, these people seem unchanged since the days of Abraham', posited Conder.[18] In *The Crescent and the Cross*, Eliot Warburton expressed the same sentiment, claiming that 'the Ishmaelite [a reference to the Bedouin as the descendants of the Biblical Ishmael] has gone down to his desert grave, generation after generation, unchanging and unsubdued', while John Kelman in *The Holy Land* claimed that a Bedouin encampment was 'a scene of the unadulterated East just such a scene as might have

[15] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), pp. 515, 525, 564
[16] Claude Reignier Conder, *Heth and Moab. Explorations in Syria in 1881 and 1882* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1885), p. 116
[17] Gray Hill, *With the Beduins: A Narrative of Journeys and Adventures in Unfrequented Parts of Syria* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1891), p. 44
[18] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 337, 346

been witnessed any time these three thousand years'.[19] Bedouin society thus presented travellers with what they imagined to be an accurate reproduction of Old Testament life, as David Morison Ross wrote in his *The Cradle of Christianity*:

> When you see an Arab *shêkh* at the head of his tribe, herds of cattle and goats gathered by their shepherds round the troughs at a well, strings of camels laden with merchandise, the black tents of the Bedawin on a stretch of pasture, and the solitary thick-leafed oaks which invite the traveller to their shelter in the heat of the day, the stories of the patriarchal age seem as if they were being acted out before your eyes.[20]

Goodrich-Freer expressed the same sentiment in her *In a Syrian Saddle*, writing 'in a Bedawin tent we may recreate the life of the patriarchs, and realise that Abraham was but a wealthy shech'.[21] From this attitude sprang much of travellers' respect for the Bedouin; with its Biblical nobility and simplicity, the "patriarchal" life of the Bedouin could, in some respects, implicitly be painted as the wellspring of the moral values of contemporary Protestant Christianity. However, as with the other comparisons of Palestine and its people with the Biblical past, this helped erase the present, and indelibly associated Palestine with antiquity.

There was also a negative flipside of the Biblicised representation of the Bedouin. As well as seeming reminiscent of the noble Israelite patriarchs, when traveller-writers wished to emphasise the negative features they ascribed to the Bedouin, particularly their supposed impact on the landscape as discussed below, they could cast the Bedouin in the role of the ancient Hebrews' tribal enemies who had lived east of the Jordan. For instance, retelling a Biblical story, in *Palestine Illustrated* Richard Temple described the ancient Midianites as 'Bedouin Arabs', while Haskett Smith agreed in *Patrollers of Palestine* that 'the Midianites were simply tribes of those wandering Arabs whom we know at the present day under the name of the Bedouin'.[22] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley in his *Sinai and Palestine* vividly castigated the effects of Bedouin raids on the *fellahin*'s agriculture, writing that they were

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[19] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 271; John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 104

[20] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), pp. 6-7

[21] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co., 1905), p. 209

[22] Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1888), p. 202; Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 302

> but a miniature representation of the one great visitation which lived for ages afterwards in the memory of the Jewish people; the invasion, not of the civilised nations of Assyria or Egypt, or of the Canaanite cities, but of the wild population of the Desert itself, "the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the Children of the East."

As with the representation of the *fellahin* as Canaanites, the representation of the Bedouin as kin to the 'wild population of the Desert' who once harassed the Israelites, had sinister undertones. As the Midianites had threatened the ancient Jews and had been defeated militarily, so could the Bedouin be portrayed as obstacles to "regenerating" the Holy Land, who might in turn be banished from the region.

The Bedouin received much negative or condescending representation. 'Noble' while the 'savage' was, the Bedouin remained savage, characterised according to Stanley with 'untameable barbarism'.[23] One trope was the Bedouins' supposedly primitive or childlike mentality. Mary Eliza Rogers in *Domestic Life in Palestine* claimed that of 'the spirit of human life in all its progressive stages' which she had encountered in the Eastern Mediterranean, 'the tents of lawless wanderers' and of 'more peaceful tribes, who dwell in patriarchal simplicity in stationary tents', were the most primitive.[24] Complaining of the apparent failure of the Bedouin to maintain wells around the Dead Sea, Tristram wrote that 'like true savages, with the sight and instinct of the keenest red Indian, they are very babes in prevision or prudence'.[25] This was an ominous comparison of the Bedouin with an indigenous people from a settler-colonised context, widely believed to be on the verge of extinction in the face of "progress", a fate the Bedouin might share in the event of Palestine's colonisation.

Frequently, the Bedouin were given childish attributes, or literally described as children. Norman Macleod recounted in *Eastward* that when travelling in remote areas where Bedouin attack was feared, rather than relying on 'powder and shot' for safety, he took with him 'a musical snuff-box, to conquer the Arabs'. According to him, the music produced a 'revolution' in 'the Arab skull', winning him respect from 'the "children of the desert", old and young'.[26] Another trope was a childlike greed, manifested through begging for *bakshish*: in his story "A Ride Across Palestine", Anthony Trollope

[23] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), pp. 340, 55
[24] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862) p. 324
[25] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 353
[26] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), pp. 95-96, 282

wrote that his characters' Bedouin guides to the Dead Sea 'were essentially true to us, but teased us almost to frenzy by their continual begging. They begged for our food and our drink, for our cigars and our gunpowder, for the clothes off our backs, and the handkerchiefs out of our pockets'.[27] Conder claimed that the Bedouins' 'quarrels, jealousies, and infidelities are as petty and short-sighted as any in the West', and that 'there is but one object which the Arab places steadily before his face, and that is the acquisition of wealth'.[28] Untruthfulness and lack of religion were also frequent charges made by travellers of the Bedouin. Russell for instance claimed that 'no one can believe a word they say', and 'of religion it may be said they have but little'. With reference to European criteria, Russell accused them of being 'utterly ignorant of the great world in which they live' as they have 'neither books nor newspapers'.[29]

More serious charges Western travellers levelled at the Bedouin were the supposed danger they posed to all passing through territory they inhabited, and the damage they were believed to inflict on the Palestinian landscape. Travellers represented the Bedouin lifestyle, though romantic and Biblical, as being underpinned by theft, the plunder of defenceless villagers and unsuspecting travellers alike, and essentially parasitic. William Hepworth Dixon in *The Holy Land* wrote with a Biblical flourish that 'now, as in the days of Gideon, the nomad is a robber and the black [Bedouin] tent a curse'.[30] James Kean in *Among the Holy Places* wrote of the Bedouin east of the Jordan that, while living like 'Abraham and Sarah', they

> did not disguise the fact, however, that they looked upon robbery as their proper calling. They avoid violence if possible; but if three or four of them meet one or two of you, they simply call your attention to the disparity of numbers, and request you to hand over what you happen to carry.

Contributing to the general picture of anarchy and Ottoman misrule, Kean added that these Bedouin 'hardly own the supremacy of the Turk: they are practically beyond the ken of the police'.[31]

Throughout the nineteenth century, travelogue authors asserted the necessity of hiring Bedouin guards as protection when travelling in remote regions, even the

[27] Anthony Trollope, "A Ride Across Palestine" in *Tales of All Countries* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1873 [1863]), Volume 1, 320-353, p. 341
[28] Conder, *Heth and Moab*, p. 324
[29] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, pp. 79-81
[30] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), p. 106
[31] James Kean, *Among the Holy Places: A Pilgrimage Through Palestine* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, n/d [1895-1906]), p. 168

short distance from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. 'In visiting some of the less frequented districts an escort is necessary', wrote Porter in his *Handbook*, adding that 'the escort should be comprised of members of that tribe to which the country we propose to visit belongs'.[32] Russell gave the dire warning that 'any traveller refusing these terms runs the risk of losing his property, and probably his life'.[33] The Bedouin escorts were often viewed as untrustworthy and only marginally better than those they protected against. Macleod described his guards' faces as 'concentrating scoundrel in every feature', continuing that he 'singled out two or three, and pictured to myself the feelings of any decorous parson, or sensitive lady, who might fall into such hands on the lonely and bituminous shores of the Dead Sea'. In a moment of overt racism, he proclaimed that 'one man, a black [i.e. an Afro-Arab Bedouin], seemed to me the personification of animal ugliness'.[34] As time progressed, travellers grew sceptical of the danger posed by Bedouin – which was declining as the Ottomans brought the region under control throughout the period – and started to view Bedouin escorts as a protection racket rather than a necessary precaution.[35] Haskett Smith complained that 'the fiction is still kept up that the road from Jerusalem to Jericho is dangerous, owing to the marauding Bedouins', with the result that 'no European travellers are allowed to undertake the journey except under the escort of a duly qualified guide, for whose services they have, of course, to pay pretty dearly'. However, these guides were, Smith claimed, 'the very Bedouin Arabs themselves who infest the district'.[36] This became another opportunity to emphasise the dishonesty and greed of the Bedouin.

A graver sin was the Bedouins' supposed impact on the land. Traveller-writers represented the lawless Bedouin as posing a serious danger to Palestine: according to John Wilson in *The Lands of the Bible*, 'they threaten soon to possess the whole country', while to Stanley, while Palestine was 'an island in the midst of pirates', the Bedouin being 'the corsairs of the wilderness'.[37] They were accused of playing a purely destructive role, stealing and destroying crops and livestock, thus removing the incentive for the *fellahin* to farm, and causing a dearth of population in the most fertile

[32] Porter, *Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine*, p. xliii
[33] Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities*, p. 67
[34] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 192
[35] For Ottoman authority over the Bedouin, see Alan George, "'Making the Desert Bloom': A Myth Examined", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Winter 1979), 88-100, p. 90
[36] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 269
[37] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (London: William White and Co., 1847), Volume 2, p. 710; Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 136

areas. Tristram lamented that, in the coastal Plain of Sharon, 'land is going out of cultivation, and whole villages rapidly disappearing from the face of the earth', entirely as a result the activity of the Bedouin, who were 'very rapidly […] encroaching wherever horse can be ridden'.[38] James Finn wrote even more dramatically of the effect of the Bedouin on the land in *Stirring Times*:

> None but those who have seen it can appreciate the devastation wrought in a few hours by these wild hordes. Like locusts they spread over the land, and their camels, only too glad to revel upon the luxury of green food, strip every leaf off the vines, and devour, while they trample down, all corn or vegetable crops, leaving bare brown desolation where years of toil had made smiling fields and vineyards. Nor is this all, for the cattle and flocks are swept off to the desert by the marauders – who leave behind, for the unfortunate peasant, nothing that they can carry away.[39]

Finn repeated his language of dehumanisation of the Bedouin in his *Byeways in Palestine*. Alleging that Bedouin refused the inhabitants of Taybeh village near Jericho permission to cultivate Bedouin-owned land, Finn exclaimed 'I could not but be sincerely desirous to have such Arab vermin as these mongrel tribes swept off the land'.[40]

The Bedouin were thus explicitly posited by traveller-writers as one of the main impediments to progress and productivity in Palestine, and implicitly to any future European settler colonial ventures there. As discussed further in Chapter Eleven, several travellers, most notably Laurence Oliphant, formulated plans for the Bedouin to be 'swept off the land' in the event of Palestine's colonisation by a European power. Bedouin were the first Palestinians to be identified as subjects for ethnic cleansing; the nomadic lifestyle travellers believed they followed would mean they could easily survive elsewhere than on Palestinian soil. That the plan for the elimination of the Bedouin presence from the region, and the destruction of their way of life, accompanied panegyrics to their nobility, is not surprising: in the North American context, the Noble Savage paradigm accompanied the dispossession of the indigenous people, until they were no longer considered a threat to the white settlers.[41]

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[38] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 490
[39] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 1, p. 315
[40] James Finn, *Byeways in Palestine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877 [1868]), p. 213
[41] Higham, *Noble Savages and Wretched Indians*, p. 34

Simultaneously, travellers' assertions of virtual Bedouin control of large fertile regions of Palestine, and their prevention of any farming taking place there, was an exaggeration, particularly as the nineteenth century progressed; it presented an impression of Palestine as under-cultivated, underpopulated except by Bedouin nomads, lacking efficient central control, and thus ideal for colonisation. Unsurprisingly, an image of Palestine in the late Ottoman era dominated by Bedouin raiders has been reproduced by supporters of Zionism and Israel since 1948.[42] Totally overlooked in this image, and in the travelogues, was the vital social function the nomadic Bedouin played in facilitating trade between the towns and cities of Palestine and the wider Eastern Mediterranean.[43]

A final aspect of travellers' representation of the Bedouin was their predictions of the role the Bedouin could play in a future colonial occupation of Palestine. Travellers portrayed Bedouin as fiercely independent of, and resentful of, Ottoman control of the Eastern Mediterranean. Finn claimed that the Bedouin 'detest and hate the Turks with an ancient hatred which goes back to the period of the Ottoman conquest of "Arabistân"', while Ross added that they 'cherish dreams of the establishment of an Arabian empire'.[44] Simultaneously, some travellers portrayed Bedouin they met expressing close kinship with the British, springing from Britain's contribution to the 1840 defeat of the Egyptian occupation of the Levant, which had initiated harsh reprisals against the Bedouin and was deeply unpopular among them. Wilson presented a tribe he encountered as being 'well acquainted with the greatness of the English'.[45] Dixon recorded of an encounter with an aged Bedouin that 'at the name of England the sheikh bows his head, in token of peace', and informed him 'that the Saxon and the Arab are brethren, and that the English are white Moslems of a Western sect'.[46]

This representation of Arab-English kinship not only served to underscore the gentlemanly values supposedly shared by the Bedouin and the British, but also had political implications. While Britain and the Ottoman Empire remained allies until the early 1880s, should a British occupation of Palestine ever occur, as many travellers expected, the Bedouin "martial race" might prove useful, even while the new colonial

[42] Alan George, "'Making the Desert Bloom'", p. 96
[43] see Ilan Pappe, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 18
[44] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, p. 214; Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 252
[45] Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, p. 169
[46] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 72

power planned their expulsion from the land. Promising aid in restoring 'Arabistân' would help win their loyalty. Conder provided an anecdote of Palestinian Bedouin who, believing him to be the British Consul, asked him 'when will you come and give us water, and make us vineyards?' Conder 'replied with a comprehensive nod of the head and the remark that "God made the country for the Bedawî"'. He claimed that the Bedouin 'seem to have a firmly-rooted conviction that Christians can command the rain, and that they had once made vineyards in this part of the wilderness'.[47] This was a variation of travellers' refrain of Palestinians begging Westerners for their own country's colonisation as discussed in Chapter Eleven, though with an added nuance of travellers' belief in the particular role the Bedouin might play. This belief of travellers was not limited to Palestine's Bedouin, and was shared by travellers who visited other Arab regions under Ottoman rule.[48] Ultimately it contributed to Britain's Arab policy during the First World War, the Hussein-McMahon correspondence of 1915-16 promising Arab independence, and the activities of T.E. Lawrence (1888-1935) fostering the Arab Revolt in the Hijaz region.[49] Conder hinted at this strategy decades earlier, writing of his guide Sheikh Goblan that 'the Arabs of Moab regard this venerable outlaw as their natural chief in case of any outbreak against the Turkish Government, but he is not likely to risk his neck in such a cause unless he knows that European aid can be relied on'.[50]

Travellers' discourse on the Bedouin in Palestine closely foreshadowed later British Mandate policies and Zionist attitudes. Perhaps partly out of admiration for their "patriarchal" social structure and "martial" qualities, the British did not wish to disturb the traditional tribal organisation of the Bedouin, and instead sought to co-opt and rule them indirectly through it, also recruiting Bedouin for the Mandate police force in a colonial divide-and-rule tactic.[51] With the *Nakba* of 1948, wishes for the expulsion of Bedouin were actualised, as their number fell from over 95,500 in the Naqab before 1948 to 11,000, and over 17,000 in the Galilee to 5000, the majority becoming refugees. With the Bedouin who remained, the State of Israel pursued policies of land

[47] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 264
[48] Nasir, *The Arabs and the English*, p. 73
[49] On the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, see Victor Kattan*, From Coexistence to Conquest: International Law and the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1891-1949* (London: Pluto Press, 2009), pp. 39-40
[50] Conder, *Heth and Moab*, p. 117
[51] See Mansour Nasasra, *The Naqab Bedouins: A Century of Politics and Resistance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), pp. 58-91

confiscation and forced resettlement, resembling the reservation systems of other settler-colonial contexts, and the influential recommendations of Oliphant.[52]

Israeli academics have drawn on the works of Victorian travellers to accuse the Bedouin in the late Ottoman era for Palestine's supposed lack of cultivation: Ruth Kark and Noam Levin wrote in 2013 that 'Bedouin tribes controlled most of the plains […] Thus, only a fraction of the country was being utilized for agriculture'. Finn's *Stirring Times* is cited as evidence.[53] Reminiscent of travellers' de-indigenisation of the Bedouin, Israeli academics have also spent much time attempting to disprove the Bedouins' own claims of indigeneity.[54] Nevertheless, elements of the romantic image have persisted to the present, as a tourist industry controlled largely by Jewish Israelis and government agencies has sought to Orientalise the Bedouin of southern Israel for internal and external consumption.[55] The position of the Palestinian Bedouin in Israel today reflects to no small extent the contradictory elements of British travellers' representation of the Bedouin in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[52] Ghazi Falah, "How Israel Controls the Bedouin in Israel", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, Special Issue: The Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories (Winter 1985), 35-51, pp. 37, 38
[53] Ruth Kark and Noam Levin, "The Environment in Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period, 1798-1918" in Daniel E. Orenstein, Alon Tal and Char Miller (eds.), *Between Ruin and Restoration: An Environmental History of Israel* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 1-28, p. 15
[54] Seth J. Frantzman, Havatzelet Yahel and Ruth Kark, "Contested Indigeneity: The Development of an Indigenous Discourse on the Bedouin of the Negev, Israel", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 2012), 78-104
[55] Steven G. Dinero, "Image is Everything: The Development of the Negev Bedouin as a Tourist Attraction", *Nomadic Peoples*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2002), 69-94

## II.I: 'The Only Race Fit to be Our Allies': Traveller-Writers and the Druze

In northern Palestine, travellers came into contact with the Druze population, whom Oliphant estimated at around 120,000 across the Eastern Mediterranean.[56] Travellers' interest in the Druze was fed not only by their interest in Druze religion and society, discussed at length by Orientalists and in some travelogues.[57] They were also keenly aware of conflicts the Druze had with other communities and the Ottoman authorities. In the fighting on Mount Lebanon between Druze and Maronite Christians in 1860-1861, Britain supplied arms to the Druze, whom they calculated best represented British interests in the region, particularly against France.[58] While Western travellers might have been expected to feel revulsion at 'aggressions and cruelties inflicted on the poor Christians, and […] the total ruin brought upon them in the Lebanon by the Druzes, who have shewn all the duplicity and mean artfulness by which they are characterised', most in fact admired the fighting ability of the Druze, motivated by *realpolitik* rather than solidarity with non-Western Christians.[59] Belief in the Druze as a martial race indebted to the British, who would be supportive of a British occupation of Palestine, ran through their representations of the Druze.

Few communities in Palestine were celebrated in as gushing terms as the Druze. Tristram called the Lebanese Druze 'the most noble, honourable, and industrious of the Lebanon races', whilst the Palestinian Druze in Isfiya, a village on Mount Carmel, were 'a handsome, well-shaped race, and the women, especially, far surpass in figure and beauty the inhabitants of the cities and plains in the neighbourhood'. Tristram was not the only traveller to comment on Druze women's appearance; significant also was the framing of the Druze as a race, rather than community or religion, implying racial distinction from other Arabic-speaking Palestinians. Tristram even speculated, without any basis, 'a Jewish or Samaritan origin' for the Druze. He also claimed a Druze perception of close kinship between the

[56] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), p. 92
[57] For example, Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), pp. 379-408. Though Oliphant met Druze around the Levant, his chapter dedicated to them was largely based not on discussions with Druze but on Orientalist texts, particularly the 1838 *Exposé de la Religion des Druzes* by the French Orientalist Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) and the 1860 *Researches into the Religions of Syria* by John Wortabet (1825-1908), an Arab-Armenian Protestant missionary.
[58] Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A History of Modern Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2012), pp. 37-38
[59] John Wortabet, *Researches into the Religions of Syria: Or, Sketches, Historical and Doctrinal, of its Religious Sects.* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1860), p. vi

Druze and the British, writing that a group of Druze 'informed us the English were much more like Druses than [local] Christians […] rubbing their forefingers together, and exclaimed, "sowa sowa" (all alike)'.[60] Given many travellers' disdain for Palestinian Christians and liking for the Druze, some might have been tempted to agree.

Almost all travellers who represented the Druze continued this lauding of the community. John Macgregor recalled in *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* that when he purchased some food from Druze in northern Palestine, 'they refused all payment, for they were Druses, and I was an Englishman. One said that he had been at Beyrout [in 1860-1861], and liked the "Ingleez," for they were "Tyeb Keteer" (exceedingly good fellows)'.[61] Isabel Burton claimed that 'as far as blood goes, there is no one to come near the Druzes in point of physique' and that 'the best fighting men, the most manly and warlike. They always behave like gentlemen by instinct, and, briefly, they are the only race fit to be our allies'. She claimed that the Druze were '*par excellence*, *the* race in Syria. A fine, manly people, that hails us as cousins, tall and athletic, that can ride, shoot, and fight. They are honest and plain-spoken; every man is a natural born gentleman, and, without being taught, he instinctively behaves like one'.[62] These were qualities to which every Victorian Englishman might aspire; as with the Bedouin, when travellers exalted their good qualities they often presented their own self-image, in the Druze case heightened by the apparent Druze-British kinship.

Encountering the Druze in upland areas such as Mount Carmel, Lebanon and the Jawlan mountains, traveller-writers pictured the Druze as a "mountain race". Some, like Tristram, emphasised their physical characteristics which apparently set them apart from their non-Druze neighbours, a similar dynamic to that at work in representations of Christians and Christian women as discussed in Chapter Five. Equating beauty with whiteness, Conder wrote that Druze villages Isfiya and Daliat al-Karmel were 'remarkable for their race of fine handsome men and beautiful women, some with flaxen curly hair and blue eyes'.[63] Mary Rogers expressed a similar sentiment, claiming that the Druze were 'greatly superior in appearance and intelligence to the inhabitants of the villages in the plains'.[64] Yet these attitudes paled

[60] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 23, 112-113, 588
[61] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), p. 170
[62] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, pp. 106, 346
[63] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 90-91
[64] Mary Eliza Rogers, "Mount Carmel and the River Kishon" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 3, 91-108, pp. 103-105

next to the traveller most closely associated with the Druze, and whose relationship to them significantly prefigured Israel's later attempt to co-opt the community.

### II.II: 'All More or Less Under Control': Laurence Oliphant and the Druze

Oliphant's first encounter with the Druze came during his journey in search of an area for Jewish colonisation, recorded in *The Land of Gilead*. He was much taken by them, writing at length on their religion (see footnote 57 above) and extolling their virtues as others had done before. In keeping with his support for Jewish settler colonisation in Ottoman territory to enhance the Empire's security against Russia (see Chapter Eleven), Oliphant stressed the value which the Druze could have as local British allies. 'Ever since the Druse nation was saved from extinction by British intervention and the firmness and skill of Lord Dufferin', he wrote, mentioning Britain's commissioner to Syria in 1860 Frederick Temple Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood (1826-1902), 'they have looked upon the English as their natural protectors and allies. I have met individual Druses travelling in other parts of Syria who, finding I was an Englishman, at once called themselves countrymen'. Anticipating future conflict in the region, Oliphant wrote as if directly addressing the London Foreign Office: 'the day may come when it may be well to remember that we have a warlike people in Syria absolutely devoted to us, and only longing to prove that devotion in acts'.[65]

Beyond this, Oliphant praised other aspects of his interpretation of the Druze character. What were considered faults for other Orientals, such as tropes of lying and trickery, became positive virtues in perceptions of the Druze. Claiming that 'with a little practice these Druses would make first-rate diplomats', he wrote with admiration that 'under a bold, frank, manly exterior, they conceal the utmost subtlety and cunning, and have a captivating way of deceiving which quite redeems it from anything base or unworthy'. Oliphant enthusiastically continued that the same qualities would make the Druze 'excellent members of Parliament, and even Cabinet Ministers'. Himself hailing from a Highland clan, Oliphant compared the Druze 'to the Highlanders of Scotland, with whom they have many national characteristics in common', and presented their merits of which Evangelicals could approve, stating 'all the Druse men are

[65] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 345, 371

distinguished for their abstemoniousness and moderation, as their women are remarkable for their virtue'.[66]

Returning to Palestine in late 1882 with his wife and followers, Oliphant initially settled in Haifa; however, after spending summer in the cooler atmosphere of Mount Carmel, and spending significant time amongst the Druze including observing their religious festival of Nabi Shu'aib near the Sea of Galilee, Oliphant decided to make his home among the Druze, 'the most agreeable class of people to live among in Palestine'. In a letter to the *New York Sun*, subsequently included in his *Haifa*, Oliphant explained he initially intended to settle in Isfiya, but the villagers demanded an exorbitant price for the land on which he wished to build. Oliphant engaged in the familiar activity of attacking Palestinian Christians, by claiming this attempt was 'confined exclusively to the Christian section of the population', while the Druze residents 'express[ed] great indignation at the conduct of the Christians'.

Conveniently, Oliphant reported that he was visited by the Druze sheikh of Daliat al-Karmel, unable to pay the fee required to exempt his son from military service. For paying the money, Oliphant received in the village 'a vineyard and garden of fruit-trees, with a good title, and a site far surpassing in loveliness of situation that which I had failed to secure at Esfia', and also, apparently, a position of influence over the Druze inhabitants. Oliphant expressed his satisfaction that Daliat al-Karmel was 'exclusively Druse, and does not contain a single Christian inhabitant'. Oliphant had a high opinion of the home he had constructed (discussed at greater length in Chapter Eleven), claiming that 'in the eyes of the natives, this modest erection has seemed something palatial'. He claimed he had received so many Druze sheikhs at his home that he established a *liwan* or reception room, where he endeavoured to 'to try and give them some larger ideas than the very narrow ones which they have acquired upon these wild hillsides'.[67] Oliphant imagined himself as a light amongst the rough diamonds of the Druze nation.

In the letters collected in *Haifa*, Oliphant continued to represent the Druze extremely positively. 'The Druses are a sober, fairly honest, and industrious people, and have their own notions of morality, to which they rigidly adhere', he asserted; on another occasion, he stated that 'with the exception of the Japanese, the Druses are the politest and most courteous people I have ever met'; once more, he commented

[66] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 346, 348, 358, 375
[67] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 162, 163, 167

on a gathering of Druze sheikhs (at the Nabi Shu'aib festival) that he was 'much struck with the dignity of their bearing, the intelligence of their countenances, and their superior physique generally'.[68] These descriptions contrasted starkly with Oliphant's representations of Palestinians from all other religious communities. Contrasting the villages of the Druze and those of the Muslim and Christian *fellahin*, Oliphant wrote of Daliat al-Karmel that while its 'congeries of dwellings' were 'scarcely imposing-looking enough to be dignified with the name of houses', they were 'yet much superior to the huts of which an Arab village generally consists'. He continued that 'the traveller versed in fellaheen domestic life would be struck with an air of comfort, prosperity, and cleanliness here, foreign to native abodes generally'; he singled out the absence of 'gigantic manure-heaps […] common to all Arab villages' as particularly praiseworthy.[69]

Oliphant was also a serial commentator on the attractiveness of Druze women. Rana Kabbani has argued that 'the European was led into the East by sexuality, by the embodiment of it in a woman […]. He entered an imaginary harem when entering the metaphor of the Orient, weighed down by inexpressible longings'.[70] Oliphant's penchant for Druze women may have been a product of his deeply repressed sexuality; in his representation of Druze society, they stand for an eroticised, though platonic, ideal of the Oriental woman.[71] He remarked he 'was much struck with the beauty of the type of all the Dalieh women', while after observing the Nabi Shu'aib festivities, he exclaimed 'I don't know that I ever remember in the name number to have seen a larger proportion of pretty women'. As with Tristram's description, in Oliphant's representation of Druze women (and men) their beauty is frequently associated with their apparent whiteness. 'Many of the Druses, both men and women, have brown hair and blue eyes, and complexions as light as our own, and some of both sexes are singularly handsome', Oliphant commented approvingly; while writing of a Druze sheikh's young wife, 'with a fair complexion, magnificent eyes, and an elegant figure', he claimed that 'had she been dressed in the latest Parisian fashion' it would have been impossible 'by her features or complexion to distinguish her from any

[68] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 89-90, 141, 142
[69] Laurence Oliphant, "Life in a Druse Village", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 136, No. 830 (December 1884), 705-715, p. 705
[70] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule* (London: Pandora Press, 1988), p. 67
[71] For Oliphant's beliefs on sex, see Norma Clair Moruzzi, "Strange Bedfellows: The Question of Lawrence Oliphant's Christian Zionism", *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (February 2006), 55-73

pretty American woman'.[72] This attitude dovetails with Kabbani's assertion that in the Western mind, the 'desirable woman' of the Orient 'conformed closely with conventional standards of European beauty'.[73]

Whatever Oliphant's motivation for living amongst the Druze, in his own account he achieved a cult-like domination of the inhabitants of Daliat al-Karmel. 'Owing […] to the position which I occupy financially to the village, they are all more or less under control', Oliphant boasted in the last of his letters in *Haifa*. His wife Alice (1845-1886) also seemed to have exerted a strong influence over the Druze. According to an early biography of Oliphant, the Druze called her 'Sidi [Arabic: Lady] Alice', gathered in a fifty-strong cavalcade to bear her coffin after her death, and treated a memorial to her created by Oliphant with (in Oliphant's words) 'greatest veneration [as a] sacred spot'.[74] Several years after Oliphant's death, a member of his clan travelling in his footsteps recorded that 'the Druses in the villages of the hills entertain an almost superstitious veneration for his memory and that of Sitti Alice'.[75]

British travellers' attitude, especially that of Oliphant, towards the Druze significantly foreshadowed later Zionist policies. The Zionist leadership having made efforts to forge connections with the Druze during the Mandate, after 1948 the State of Israel pursued a policy 'aimed at weaning them away from the larger Palestinian Arab community by fostering "Druze particularlism," the notion that Druze ethnicity and identity make them distinct from other Arabs'.[76] The foundations of the major aspects of this 'particularism' – the Druze military prowess (which would make them prime candidates for conscription into the Israeli army), their claimed racial difference from their Palestinian neighbours, their friendliness to colonising forces whether they be the British or the Zionist movement – were already discursively laid in travelogues. Oliphant's house in Daliat al-Karmel today stands as a memorial to Druze soldiers killed in the Israel Defence Forces, but also to the way in which both British travellers and the Israeli state constructed the particularism of the Palestinian Druze community.

[72] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 90, 146, 142, 143
[73] Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient*, p. 81
[74] Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, His Wife* (William Blackwood & Sons, 1892), pp. 335, 369, 393
[75] F.R. Oliphant, *Notes of a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1891), p. 85
[76] Kais M. Firro, "Reshaping Druze Particularism in Israel", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Spring 2001), 40-53, p. 41

### III.I: 'The Ghosts of Ancient Israel': Representing the Samaritans

The Samaritan community was one of Palestine's smallest minorities, numbering only around 150 in the mid-nineteenth century.[77] Unlike other minorities, they were concentrated in only one location, Nablus, near their holy site Mount Gerizim. While a close association between travellers in Palestine and the Samaritans could not hold strategic significance for Britain's colonial desires in Palestine as relationships with the other larger minority communities could, it could hold other advantages.

For all travellers who passed through Nablus, a visit to the city's Samaritan quarter and meetings with members of the community became *de rigueur*. The continued existence of the Samaritans until the present, seemed to Evangelicals to constitute proof of the Bible. As John Mills wrote in his *Three Months' Residence at Nablus*, 'having perpetuated their ancient customs and sentiments, the life of such a people cannot but be of importance, especially to the Bible student'.[78] Oliphant declared them 'as an ethnological fraction of antiquity […] perhaps, the most interesting group of people extant'.[79] Yet this fascination had the effect of blinding travellers to the reality of the Samaritans as a living community; travellers approached them instead as an almost anomalous remnant of ancient times. Macleod expressed this most starkly, as he likened the feeling of encountering Samaritans in Palestine to 'feelings of wonder such as one might experience if in some distant land he came upon a breed of Mammoths, or Pterodactyles [sic], which everywhere else were known only as fossils'.[80] As with so many aspects of travellers' representations of Palestine, discussed further in Chapter Eight, the Samaritans' present was obscured in favour of the Biblical past.

Given many travellers' distaste for the Jews in Palestine, the Samaritans could serve as a more "authentic" model of the ancient Israelites; as Kelman wrote, they were considered 'better representatives of the ancient days' than were contemporary Jews.[81] They were depicted as having maintained racial purity throughout the ages, reflecting positively on their appearance; as with the Druze, supposedly superior physical appearance was claimed in order to separate the Samaritans from their

[77] Mills gave the figure of 150 Samaritans in 1855. John Mills, *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans* (London: John Murray, 1864), p. 179
[78] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. vii
[79] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 346
[80] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 236
[81] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 99

neighbours. Stanley presented them as 'the oldest and the smallest sect in the world', and 'distinguished by their noble physiognomy and stately appearance from all other branches of the race of Israel'.[82] Mills claimed that 'in appearance the Samaritans are far superior to their circumstances, as also to all others around them', and that 'as a community, there is nothing in Palestine to compare with them'. The separation from other communities which British travellers believed the Samaritans had maintained was viewed favourably. As Mills claimed, 'they themselves make no difference between their political or national community and their religious community, but to them both are one and the same'. This reflected Evangelicals' view of the Jews and encouraged their belief in an ancient Jewish national identity in Palestine.

By contrast with the virile and warlike image of the Bedouin and Druze, traveller-writers portrayed the Samaritans as vulnerable, oppressed by the Ottomans and the 'fanatical' Muslims of Nablus (as discussed in Chapter Ten). Travellers even expressed their expectation that the Samaritans were doomed to vanish. 'They have now dwindled down to a very small number, and before many generations more have passed away, this nation, in all probability, will have become extinct', Mills predicted. He had no doubts as to who to blame, claiming 'the Mohammedans, ever ready to fall upon unbelievers, have wreaked their fanaticism upon the feeble and unprotected Samaritans times without number'.[83] Conder too claimed that 'year by year the Samaritans are dying out', while Kelman added evocatively that 'they are the ghosts of ancient Israel, who seem to haunt rather than to enjoy their former heritage' – already ghosts even before their predicted disappearance.[84] The image of the twilight of the Samaritans, to travellers' minds caused by Islamic rule in Palestine, continued into the British Mandate era, as did philanthropic efforts from the West to protect the community. As a result of their claims of ancestry and Biblical connotations they had for Westerners, the Samaritans became a *cause célèbre* in a way that other indigenous Palestinian communities could not match.

Some travellers saw an upside in the predicted disappearance of the Samaritans: the opportunity it would afford Western Biblical scholars to acquire Samaritan religions texts. Since the sixteenth century, Westerners had aggressively attempted to acquire examples of the Samaritan Torah, but had often encountered an

[82] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 240
[83] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 179, 209, 276-277
[84] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 28; Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 99

unwillingness of the Samaritans to part with their historic documents.[85] John Wilson reported a sinister discussion he had with a Samaritan priest, in which the latter firmly stated that the Samaritans would '"on no account whatever sell a copy of the books of our prophet"', to which Wilson replied '"take care what you say; if the English come and take possession of the country, and restore to you Mount Gerizim, won't you give them a copy of the Law in token of your gratitude?"'[86] Predicting that the community would 'speedily cease to exist altogether', Samuel Manning in his *"Those Holy Fields"* reflected, with an unpleasant lack of concern for the welfare of the Samaritans themselves, that 'their synagogue rolls may then come into the hands of Europeans, and receive a more careful and thorough examination than has been hitherto possible'.[87] This was never to be, though the West's desire for the Samaritans' manuscripts did lead to the dramatic rise and the fall of one Samaritan, each twist and turn carefully chronicled in travellers' accounts.

## III.II: 'The Prince of the Samaritans': The Rise, Fall and Rise Again of Ya'qub al-Shalabi

One particular member of the Samaraitan community emerges vividly from the pages of British travelogues. Owing to his long association with foreign travellers, visits to Britain and colourful personality, Ya'qub al-Shalabi or 'Jacob esh Shelaby' as his name was often anglicised, was portrayed in numerous travel accounts. Information on Ya'qub's family and early life comes from his autobiographical pamphlet *Notices of the Modern Samaritans*, a unique work of nineteenth-century Palestinian autoethnography.[88] Ya'qub was born in 1829 into the Danfi family, not the traditional leaders or priests of the Samaritan community, but nonetheless a prominent family; according to *Notices* his grandfather 'serv[ed] faithfully under twenty-seven successive Governors' as Nablus's treasurer. However, the family fell victim to political instability. Having served the administration of Nablus under the Egyptian occupation, Ya'qub

[85] Jim Ridolfo, *Digital Samaritans: Rhetorical Delivery and Engagement in the Digital Humanities* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press and Digitalculturebooks, 2015), pp. 38-40, 28-34
[86] Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, p. 74
[87] Samuel Manning, *"Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 159
[88] For autoethnography, see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 7

reported that after the Ottomans returned in 1840 his family's 'lives were in danger; we therefore concealed ourselves, and gradually appeased the fury of the population,' by means of 'money, plate, and jewellery to the amount of nearly £1000' which they gave to Muslim leaders.[89]

Ya'qub's first contact with the West, which led to his first appearance in travel literature, was with John Wilson. Arriving in Nablus in March 1843, Wilson first contacted the Samaritan community, then went to the nearby Biblical site of Jacob's Well. 'A Samaritan lad, named Yáḳúb, offered himself as our guide' – such was Ya'qub's first textual appearance, in Wilson's *The Lands of the Bible*. Wilson was determined to retrieve a Bible which another traveller had dropped down the well some years before. He explained to Ya'qub that he would be lowered down the well on a rope, with a reward of *bakshish*. 'As he looked into the fearful pit on the brink of which he stood,' Wilson wrote, 'terror took hold of him; and he betook himself to prayer in the ancient Hebrew tongue.' When Ya'qub re-emerged, Wilson stereotypically claimed that '"*Where is the Bakshish?*" were the first words which he uttered, on regaining his facility of speech.' Afterwards, learning of Wilson's desire to obtain a copy of the Samaritan Torah, the teenage Ya'qub attempted to bargain with the traveller for the opportunity of travel, telling him (according to Wilson) '"If you will take me with you to England, I shall take my copy along with me, and we shall get on well together"'. Wilson agreed to take Ya'qub with him, but he was subsequently informed by Ya'qub that the idea 'had raised such a squall in the small tub of his community' that Ya'qub was unable to leave.[90] In this first account of Ya'qub, the features which made him initially attractive to travellers – his enthusiasm to meet Westerners, his entrepreneurial spirit, his willingness to act as middleman for the sale of Samaritan texts – are all noticeable, yet his immodest ambition was also what would later turn travellers against him and frame him as another dishonest and greedy Oriental.

Ya'qub subsequently made a concerted effort to mix with Western travellers and diplomats, forging close relationships with Britain's Vice-Consul in Haifa (later a colonial administrator in British-occupied Egypt) Edward Thomas Rogers (1831-1884) and James Finn. After working for local governors in Palestine, he fell from favour, was briefly imprisoned, and after escaping and finding refuge among a Bedouin tribe,

[89] Jacob esh Shelaby and Edward Thomas Rogers, *Notices of the Modern Samaritans, Illustrated by Incidents in the Life of Jacob esh Shelaby, Gathered from Him, and Translated by Mr. E.T. Rogers* (London: Samson Low and Son, 1855), pp. 29, 15, 30
[90] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 2, pp. 55, 56, 75, 296

received Finn's protection in Jerusalem. Meanwhile, however, according to Ya'qub, 'the whole of the Samaritan community [were] in deep poverty, their houses mortgaged, and every valuable sold'. His community's suffering finally provided Ya'qub with the opportunity to travel to Britain, accompanying Rogers on a fundraising mission in 1854. This was also the occasion for appearance of *Notices*; co-authored with Rogers, there was no clear division of labour between the two, but given Rogers' role as Ya'qub's translator as well as co-author, much of the work's tone owed to the Vice-Consul's hand, full of anecdotes of Samaritan oppression by intolerant and tyrannical Muslims, and the necessity of Western charity for the community's survival. The pamphlet also carried a 'Literal Translation of the Petition from the Samaritan Community, addressed to the English Public', which beseeched God 'to protect and everlastingly preserve the lords and subjects of the illustrious Government of Great Britain', before beseeching British Evangelicals to open their pockets for the Samaritans. And so they did – Lord Shaftesbury and the Bishop of London were included in the list of prominent contributors at the end of the book.[91]

The trip seems to have achieved its aims, Finn writing that Ya'qub 'excited particular interest among oriental scholars and others in England, and met with success at the Foreign Office'.[92] His presence in Britain, and in Ireland, was reported extensively in the press. For instance, the *Belfast News-letter* reported that on 10th January 1856, Ya'qub attended a meeting in Belfast's Victoria Hall, 'attired in the picturesque costume of his country'. Ya'qub himself apparently spoke little, admitting that 'he had only been one year in this country, and he could not speak much English' (subsequent travellers in Palestine reported him as speaking English with varying degrees of proficiency); instead, the leading Protestant clergyman William McIlwaine (1807-1885) lectured the audience on the Biblical history of the Samaritans and their more recent 'persecution'. With overt sectarian and proto-Zionist overtones, the paper stated that

> This was the first Samaritan that had ever appeared in this country or in Europe. This visit was an illustration of the singular character of the time in which we live, and might be regarded as a striking proof of the authenticity of Scriptures, which were never more audaciously attacked than at present by Infidels and Papists.

[91] Shelaby and Rogers, *Notices of the Modern Samaritans*, pp. 49, 29, 50, 55
[92] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 266

Ya'qub's journey was not free of controversy. The *News-letter* reported that McIlwaine 'read several documents to prove that Mr. Shelaby was not an impostor', to rebuff 'a rumour which had originated in Cork, having gone abroad, that he was an Italian and a Roman Catholic'.[93] Far more serious accusations were also made, however, which saw the start of Ya'qub's decline both in the eyes of travellers and of his own community. Oliphant, writing three decades later, revealed that Ya'qub had deceitfully presented himself in London as 'the Prince of the Samaritans', and had 'even captivated a fair Englishwoman, who was willing to become a Samaritan for his sake'.[94]

More of the story was provided by travellers. Edward Rogers left Ya'qub in Britain when he returned to Palestine in 1855, accompanied by his sister Mary Eliza Rogers, who included further information on 'Jacob esh Shellabi, whose visit to England may be remembered by some of my readers' in her *Domestic Life in Palestine*. Mary learnt that Ya'qub's fiancée had been married to another man in his absence, and 'seemed embittered against the English people, as it they had lured Jacob away from her'. Nevertheless, Rogers also reported that after his return in 1856, Ya'qub established 'the Shellabi School' for the Samaritan community, and eventually married a Samaritan woman named Shemseh with whom he started a family.[95] Mills, however, gave a much darker report, writing that the Samaritan High Priest 'had heard that Shelaby had met with great success [in Britain], but had remitted nothing up to that time, which had put him in a terrible rage', and by 1860 'the wound was still unhealed'. Mills revealed that Ya'qub's first engagement had been annulled because of 'Yacub's dishonourable conduct as their messenger to England, coupled with the report that he was living there like the Gentiles'.[96]

Ya'qub continued to be a point of contact for British travellers; however, their representations of him often had negative undertones. Charles Warren, visiting the Samaritans in 1867, wrote in his *Underground Jerusalem* of the power Ya'qub was seemingly amassing over his community, who seemed to Warren to be 'puppets dancing to Jacob's wire-pulling'. Warren hinted that Ya'qub had started dealing in false manuscripts, asking Warren 'about the effect of certain acids […] with the object of ascertaining a means whereby new parchment could, when written on, be made to

[93] Anonymous, "The Samaritans of Nablous", *Belfast News-letter* (11 January 1856)
[94] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 346
[95] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 244-254
[96] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 183, 197

look ancient'. Ya'qub presented Warren with some apparently genuine manuscripts, for which 'he would at the time have no payments […], and only wished them forwarded home in hopes that the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund would see their value and take him into favour and help the cause of his people'. Ya'qub was photographed handing the documents to Warren, a rare pictorial record of an encounter between an indigenous Palestinian and a Western traveller (fig. 7.2). When a reply was not quickly forthcoming, however, Ya'qub's 'great love for the Palestine Exploration Fund gradually curdled into hatred'. Warren eventually paid Ya'qub three years later, when he 'found him one day at Beyrout much in want of money'; Ya'qub 'made a wry face' over the sum Warren gave him.[97]

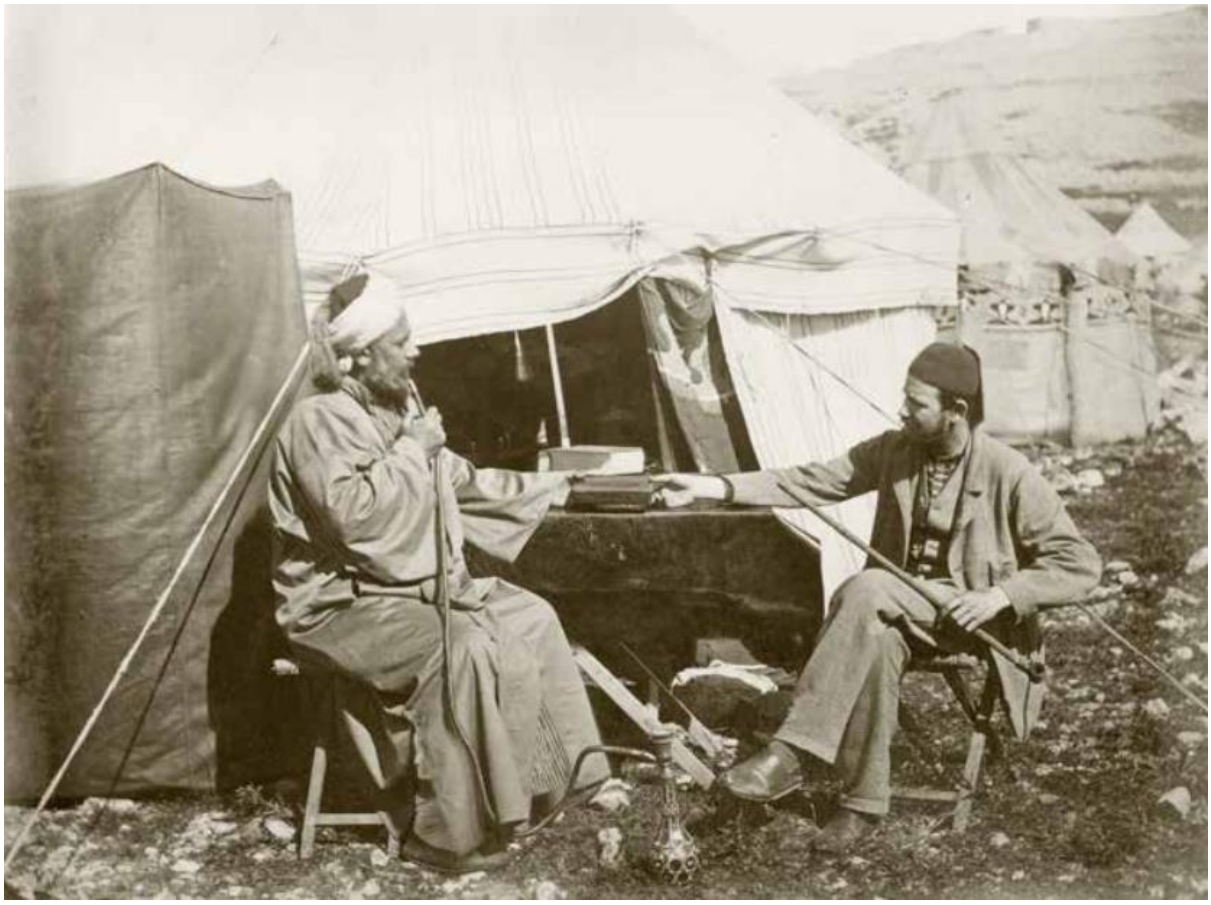

**Figure 7.2:**
**Ya'qub al-Shalabi (left) and Charles Warren on Mount Gerizim, 1867**
**Photograph by Henry Phillips**[98]

[97] Charles Warren, *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained.* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1876), pp. 225, 226, 233, 234
[98] Reproduced from Felicity Cobbing and David Jacobson, *Distant Views of the Holy Land* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2014), p. 80

Conder provided an account of his meeting with Ya'qub in 1872, presenting him as an artful con man who both stole and sold genuine manuscripts and produced forged examples:

> He supplied travellers with many ancient Samaritan hymn books, purloined, it is said, while the congregation were reverently prostrating themselves. He described to us with immense gusto the mode of preparing ancient manuscripts, by steeping a skin in coffee-grounds, and placing it for a month or two under the pillows of the diwan. Many an unwary traveller has been taken in by his false antiquities, stones, and manuscripts.

Conder that eventually the Samaritan high priest 'excommunicated Jacob, who, after holding an heretical Passover of his own on Gerizim, finally left the congregation and repaired to Jerusalem, where I saw him in 1875'.[99] In Westerners' eyes, this was a morality tale of the downfall of the archetypal greedy native, corrupted by his own Oriental venality and his unfettered contact with the West.

However, Ya'qub returned to Nablus, seemingly regained his previous power, and remained a part of many travellers' visits there. In March 1885, a British traveller T. Holmes recorded that Ya'qub 'shewed us quite a large number' of calling cards 'left by great men and others who had visited him on previous occasions'.[100] When he visited the Samaritans in Nablus in the 1880s, Ross recorded that 'we had no sooner got out of the saddle and drunk our afternoon cup of tea, than we were waited upon by Jacob Shellaby', whom he identified as 'the Shêkh (chief)' of the community. Ross described Ya'qub as 'a communicative guide', though he added 'we were not quite sure whether he was equally trustworthy'. Ross also claimed that 'we were assured by Jacob Shellaby that he is himself secretly a Christian, and that he is only waiting for the adherence of the rest of the community to the Christian faith, to declare himself openly'.[101] Ya'qub appeared as an unprincipled opportunist, ever ready to change his faith or purloin some sacred texts for some extra *bakshish*.

Ya'qub was also able to fulfil again his long-held desire of travelling to the West. Letters in the press locate Ya'qub back in Britain in January 1884 – the author of the letter admitting that 'of his personal character I cannot claim to be any judge, nor do I

[99] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 17
[100] T. Holmes, *Heart and Thought Memories of Eastern Travel.* (Bolton: J.W. Gledsdale, 1887), p. 185
[101] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 187, 190, 192-193

mean to pass any judgement on the value of the Samaritan MSS., which I understand he is now offering for sale' – and again in March 1887, when he had 'been in London for seven weeks, in a dismal attic in a by-street off Fitzroy-square', on both occasions seeking to raise further donations for the Samaritans.[102] Mentions of Ya'qub in travel texts grow thin after the 1880s, though a work by Scottish Biblical scholar and missionary based in Safad, J.E.H. Thomson (1841-1923), mentions 'Yaqub Shellaby, the High Priest in 1898', making 'a number of imaginative statements', including 'that Baron Rothschild had presented [the Samaritans] with a case for their Torah.[103]

A big personality from a small community in which Evangelicals were deeply fascinated, Ya'qub al-Shalabi was ideally placed to act as a conduit between indigenous society and the West, and to be finely characterised in their travelogues to a degree which, it seems likely, was unmatched by any other Palestinian in the late Ottoman era.[104] He both attracted travellers with his willingness to act as a guide in his locale and to help them acquire ancient artefacts, and repelled them with his ambitious and entrepreneurial attitudes that overstepped what was deemed acceptable behaviour for "Orientals". He provides a fascinating example of how some Palestinians may have reacted to the intense interest from the West in their homeland, and sought to capitalise on the large numbers of travellers arriving there; simultaneously, he represented a means by which Britain could build its foothold in the Eastern Mediterranean, by cultivating the dependency of a community which, though small, was highly symbolic of links with the Biblical past.

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The representation of the Palestinian Bedouin, Druze and Samaritan communities was a key part of the travelogues. As with the portrayals of the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities, the smaller communities' representation cannot be taken at face value. Minorities were viewed through highly Orientalist lenses by British travellers,

[102] Charles H.H. Wright, "Correspondence: The Ancient Samaritans", *Belfast News-letter* (31 January 1884); J. Estlin Carpenter, "An Interesting Visitor", *Daily News* (14 March 1887)
[103] John Ebenezer Honeyman Thomson, *The Samaritans: Their Testimony to the Religion of Israel* (London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1919), p. 399
[104] For mentions of Ya'qub in other travelogues cited in this thesis, see Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 148; Agnes Smith*, Eastern Pilgrims: The Travels of Three Ladies* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870), p. 293; Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, p. 205; Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."* pp. 153-154

their representations further subject to the influence of Biblical discourse and contemporary political events in the region. Yet the representation of each of the minorities played a distinct role in advancing British colonial designs. The Bedouin and the Druze were both valorised as martial races by traveller-writers, yet while their friendship was carefully cultivated, the former were also demonised by those believing them to be the cause of Palestine's supposed degradation. The Samaritans were treated as an archaeological curio confirming the Bible, but also an endangered and possibly disappearing race, requiring protection against Muslim hostility rule. The attitudes of travellers to all these minorities, as to the larger communities, were as to disparate fragments rather than parts of a complex indigenous society.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## ‘Through the Eyes of the Bible’: The Representation of Ancient Palestine

This chapter is the first of three examining travellers’ representations of Palestine’s physical landscape. This chapter focuses on travellers’ representations of Palestine as a land of the past, the Judeo-Christian Holy Land, and the site of the Crusades. This was perhaps the dominant view travellers took of Palestine, with a profound influence on how they approached the land and the people living on it, and their arguments for Palestine’s colonisation. The chapter is subdivided into two sections. The first deals with the textual influences on travellers leading them to view Palestine as a land of the past, ranging from the Bible to the travelogues of their contemporaries. The second focuses on representations of aspects of the landscape, further divided into three subsections, examining travellers’ representation of Palestine as evidence for the Bible, their fascination with ruins, and their representation of the Crusades.

## I: 'A Fairly Sufficient Library': Intertextuality and Ancient Landscape

The dominant way through which British travellers related to Palestine was as the Holy Land – the divinely-selected stage for the Bible and, in the title of David Morison Ross's travelogue, *The Cradle of Christianity*. Without its sacred status, Palestine would be a nondescript part of the Orient, with none of the special interest which Evangelical travellers invested in it. It would be akin to Ethiopia as described by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley in his *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History,* 'a province without any national existence of its own, and accordingly of all the towns and temples we shall pass there is not one of the slightest historical interest – not the villages in the wilds of Australia or America can be less known or less important than those'.[1]

However, Palestine was viewed in an intensely historical way owing to its religious associations. As Ridley Haim Herschell wrote in *A Visit to My Father-Land*,

> The interest attached to this part of the world is something very different from beauty of scenery, or splendor of architecture; it consists in its being the home of the Bible; in everything that one sees, recalling to mind some ancient custom, and almost every locality being connected with some important or interesting event.[2]

These sentiments are reflected in the very titles of many travelogues, such as John Wilson's *The Lands of the Bible*, Henry Baker Tristram's *The Land of Israel*, Samuel Manning's *"Those Holy Fields"* and, most simply, *The Holy Land*, the title of numerous travelogues by authors including William Hepworth Dixon and John Kelman.

While travellers revered Palestine, their almost exclusive view of it as the Holy Land consigned Palestine to being a site only of the past and the prophesied future, not the present; a land with a glorious antiquity, but little to speak of since, until the expected Jews' "return". This strongly influenced, in many cases even determined, their views of late Ottoman Palestine as an abandoned and desolate land, as discussed in Chapter Nine, and a colonial prize, as discussed in Chapter Eleven. This chapter focuses on travellers' representation of Palestine's past as the Holy Land, which they believed was still inscribed in the existing landscape.

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[1] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), p. xlix

[2] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to my Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.*, (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843])

During the nineteenth century, the reconceptualization of Palestine's importance as a physical, geographic entity occurred, in Elias Sanbar's term 'the invention of the Holy Land' in the Western imagination.[3] With the growing ease of travel to Palestine, and safety for Western travellers, Palestine was transformed from an almost mythical land which could be known only through the Bible, to a real location which could be visited, through which, in an inversion of the previous relationship, the Bible could be known better. Yet although the Palestinian landscape could now be empirically experienced, it was still subject to the imagination and processes of mythicization. Though they believed they looked upon the land objectively, with eyes unclouded by the superstitions they ascribed to non-Protestant Christians, travellers were subject to a multitude of external, particularly textual, influences.

No text, of course, is beyond intertextual influences. As Roland Barthes wrote in his essay "The Death of the Author", a text is 'a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash', and even 'a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture'.[4] Undoubtedly, substantial portions of the cultural detritus of the Victorian and Edwardian eras were reflected in the huge pool of Palestine travelogues. However, texts on the Orient were especially subject to a particular body of other texts. Edward Said has written definitively on the textual nature of Westerners' relationship to the Orient, that 'the Orient studied was a textual universe by and large; the impact of the Orient was made through books and manuscripts'.[5] As noted by Issam Nassar, travellers arriving in Palestine brought with them preconceptions derived from material they had previously read.[6]

If the wider Orient was a 'textual universe', this was especially true of Palestine, not only represented in hundreds of Western texts but also the subject of its "own" Orientalism, Biblical Orientalism, with the supreme text at its heart, the Bible. Travellers interpreted Palestine through the Bible, which was not just a text, but a document profoundly bound up with and inscribed upon Palestine's landscape. As Eitan Bar-Yosef writes, 'the Bible was the map with which Palestine's landscape was

[3] Elias Sanbar, "The Invention of the Holy Land" in Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 292-296
[4] Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author" in *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 142-148, p. 146
[5] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 52
[6] Issam Nassar, "In Their Image: Jerusalem in Nineteenth-Century English Travel Narratives", *Jerusalem Quarterly* Vol. 19 (October 2003), 6-22

scrutinised'.[7] The literal truth, accuracy and authority of the Bible was never questioned. Hence Josias Leslie Porter began his *Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine* with the qualifying words 'the Bible is the best handbook for Palestine; the present work is only intended to be a companion to it'.[8]

This sentiment was frequently restated. Travellers not only took their Bibles with them to Palestine, but kept the book to hand, reading its passages at certain points and using its descriptions to identify landmarks and locations of events, regardless of how the land may have changed in the intervening millennia. Stanley, the doyen of British Biblical archaeologists, evocatively stated that his purpose in travelling in Palestine had been to see the country 'through the eyes of the Bible'.[9] 'The Bible was our companion everywhere' claimed Elizabeth Rundle Charles in her *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas*; 'we passed through the land with our Bibles in our hands', Tristram related in *The Land of Israel*; while Norman Macleod recorded in *Eastward* that he had walked along the Via Dolorosa and at other key sites around Jerusalem 'alone, with no companion but my Bible', despite its practical uselessness as a guide to the urban environment of the contemporary city.[10] John Macgregor wrote in *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* that 'my copy of St. John's Gospel was always the most vivid handbook of the scenery around'.[11] Manning in his *"Those Holy Fields"* urged subsequent travellers to 'read the history of Ruth on the spot' at locations associated with the Biblical figure near Bethlehem, for 'every minutest detail acquires a new interest and meaning'.[12]

Although topographic research such the Palestine Exploration Fund's Survey of Western Palestine, detailed in Claude Reignier Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine*, increased knowledge in the West of Palestine's landscape, throughout the period investigated in this thesis nothing could shake the belief in the Bible's relevance as a

[7] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 62
[8] Josias Leslie Porter, *A Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine; Including an Account of the Geography, History, Antiquities, and Inhabitants of these Countries, the Peninsula of Sinai, Edom, and the Syrian Desert; with Detailed Descriptions of Jerusalem, Petra, Damascus, and Palmyra.* (London: John Murray, 1858), Volume 1, p. xi
[9] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. ix
[10] Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), p. 82; Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), p. 635; Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 183
[11] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), p. 269
[12] Samuel Manning, *"Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 43

guidebook to contemporary Palestine. In the early twentieth century, Kelman could still state confidently in *The Holy Land* that 'the Bible is incomparably the best guide-book to Syria; and you seem to journey through its chapters as you move from place to place'.[13] The carrying of Bibles and the referencing of them throughout Palestine is still a common practice among Protestant tourist-pilgrims today, as Israeli writer and erstwhile tour guide Jackie Feldman has noted.[14] The use of the Bible, a two-thousand year-old text, as the definitive means to interpret the current Palestine, indicates that travellers' priority was not to witness the existing Palestine around them, but to revert to a Biblical time; as Manning admitted in his description of the landscape around Jerusalem, 'the outward features of the landscape were scarcely seen. The present was lost sight of and forgotten in the memories of the past'.[15] The Bible was the frame through which travellers tried to interpret the Palestine they saw, but the reverse process, by which travellers used the Palestinian landscape to better understand or "prove" the Bible, was also common, as explored below.

Palestine's sacred connotations were such that travellers frequently reported feelings of ecstatic awe at merely being in the Holy Land. These feelings could begin whilst at sea if the travellers, as most did, arrived in Palestine by the port of Jaffa after a Mediterranean voyage. Macleod wrote of his fellow passengers 'straining our eyes to get a first glimpse of [Palestine's] everlasting hills'; Frederick Treves wrote in *The Land That Is Desolate* that 'he must be dull who does not look eagerly at sunrise for the first sight of this venerable country'.[16]

While journeying through the landscape, many traveller-writers gave the impression of being overwhelmed when finding themselves in locations they were familiar with from Christian doctrine. Often, they claimed that such feelings could not be understood except by those who had been to Palestine, and could not even be verbally described. 'I cannot convey an adequate idea of my feelings on finding myself at Nazareth', wrote Herschell of Christ's hometown, while of his first sight of Jerusalem he claimed 'the feelings of such a moment cannot be described; they can only be faintly imagined by those who have not experienced them'.[17] Eliot Warburton wrote in

[13] John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 100
[14] Jackie Feldman, *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land: How Christian Pilgrims Made Me Israeli* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), p. 28
[15] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, pp. 28-29
[16] Macleod, *Eastwards*, p. 78; Frederick Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1912), p. 3
[17] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, pp. 83, 113

*The Crescent and the Cross*, '"What is yonder village?" "Nazareth." "What yonder lake?" "The sea of Galilee." Only he who has heard these answers from a native of Palestine can understand their thrilling sound'.[18] Whilst Evangelicals mocked the reverence that non-Protestant Christians displayed at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in their travelogues they evinced similar emotions when confronted with other locations which could incontrovertibly, in their minds, be tied to moments in the Biblical narrative: only Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christians had the right to express such feelings. Their deeply emotional and mystical reaction to being in Palestine, existing alongside the pretence of Protestant rationalism and scientific approach to the historicity of the Bible and landscape, effectively reduced Palestine's significance to its spiritual importance for Western travellers.

Such was the Bible's centrality to Western travellers' view of Palestine, that even the most mundane phenomena became invested with a divine significance simply because they were in the Holy Land, as Warburton illustrated:

> The reader may smile; but it was with something like grave respect I looked upon each carpenter in Bethlehem; the very donkeys assumed an additional interest; and the cross with which they are so singularly marked, a meaning: the camels seemed as if they had just come from the East with gifts, and the palm-tree offered its branches to strew the holy ground; every shepherd appeared to have a mystic character; and, when "night came with stars," I almost looked for His, and tried to trace it over Bethlehem.[19]

Warburton's readers might have smiled, but at least his camels, palm-trees, and star-strewn skies possessed some Oriental mystique; Thomas Jenner in *That Goodly Mountain and Lebanon* was so affected that he quoted from the Bible on every occasion from a donkey braying to a cock crowing.[20] Every aspect of travellers' lives in Palestine could take on a sacred meaning. Isabel Burton, whilst herself a Catholic, captured the Evangelical spirit of Palestine travel when she wrote in her *The Inner Life of Syria* that 'every day passed there we live Bible lives, we speak Bible language, and it becomes natural that we should do so'.[21]

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[18] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 216
[19] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, pp. 254-255
[20] Thomas Jenner, *That Goodly Mountain and Lebanon* (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1873), pp. 41-44
[21] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co.), Volume 1, p.273

In many travelogues, significant space was dedicated not to the contemporary Palestine encountered by the travellers, but to Biblical stories associated with the sites they visited. Biblical narratives were retold to the travelogues' audience, which (as Bar-Yosef has shown) being literate, middle class and saturated in Victorian Evangelical ideology from churches and Sunday schools, was certain to be already familiar with most of the parables.[22] Instead of a highly detailed description of Jerusalem street life, readers were fed dramatized accounts of Christ's suffering on the Via Dolorosa; representations of Nablus nearly invariably related the existing city to the ancient Shechem and the blessings and curses hurled between Israelite tribes from the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal in the Book of Deuteronomy; journeys on Mount Carmel would be interspersed with the story of the Prophet Elijah's sacrifice in the Books of Kings. This representation effectively obscured the Palestine of the day and its living indigenous people, and put the characters and events of the Bible in the foreground.

An example was the series *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by the Palestine Exploration Fund archaeologist Charles Wilson. The volumes of the series paired meticulously detailed illustrations of Palestine – urban landscapes almost always depicted as crumbling and overgrown with weeds (fig. 8.1), natural landscapes pristine and strewn with ancient ruins (fig. 8.2) – with lengthy retellings of Biblical history. Similarly, in his *The Holy Land*, instead of providing an account of Palestinian life in Bethlehem, Dixon devoted four chapters to the Old and New Testament stories associated with the town.[23]

There was a marked preference for the Old Testament rather than the New, for several reasons. Firstly, it accorded with Evangelical Protestantism's fascination with the Old Testament. In the time of the Puritans, it had been their 'one and only book'; elements of the 'Hebraism' which had permeated everyday life survived and became prominent again during the Evangelical Revival.[24] Secondly, while the New Testament pointed the way to a "New Jerusalem" realised in heaven rather than on Earth, Old Testament tales seemed, travellers thought, to have a greater physical presence in the landscape of Palestine. Of the New Testament, Wilson wrote in *Picturesque Palestine* that 'the events and truths are too spiritual to be touched by the local and

[22] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917*, p. 11; see also Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian England* (Bangor: Headstart, 1993), pp. 35-6
[23] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), pp. 77-104
[24] Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 22-23

natural position of mountain and valley, of building and vegetation'. However, he continued that

> For the Old Testament, where the name of every plain is significant, where the formation of every glen has wrought itself into a picture, where every stream, spring, and well has intertwined itself with some sacred history, where every bird and beast has almost a voice that speaks, it is not too much to say, "Thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favour the dust thereof."[25]

Not insignificant was also the fact that while most New Testament sites – many of which were disputed by Western travellers – were marked by churches or monasteries of non-Protestant sects, many Old Testament sites were either, like the Temple site/Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem or Cave of the Patriarchs/Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, under Islamic custodianship which travellers found far less offensive, or – even better – in remote areas of the rural landscape, where there was little indigenous presence.

Finally, what travellers thought of as Old Testament landscapes allowed them to cast their imaginations back to a period suiting their beliefs on Palestine and its people; as discussed above the Jews were sometimes likened as heroic Hebrew warriors, whilst Palestinians were transformed into subservient Canaanites.

[25] Charles W. Wilson, "Introduction" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 1, vii-x, p. x

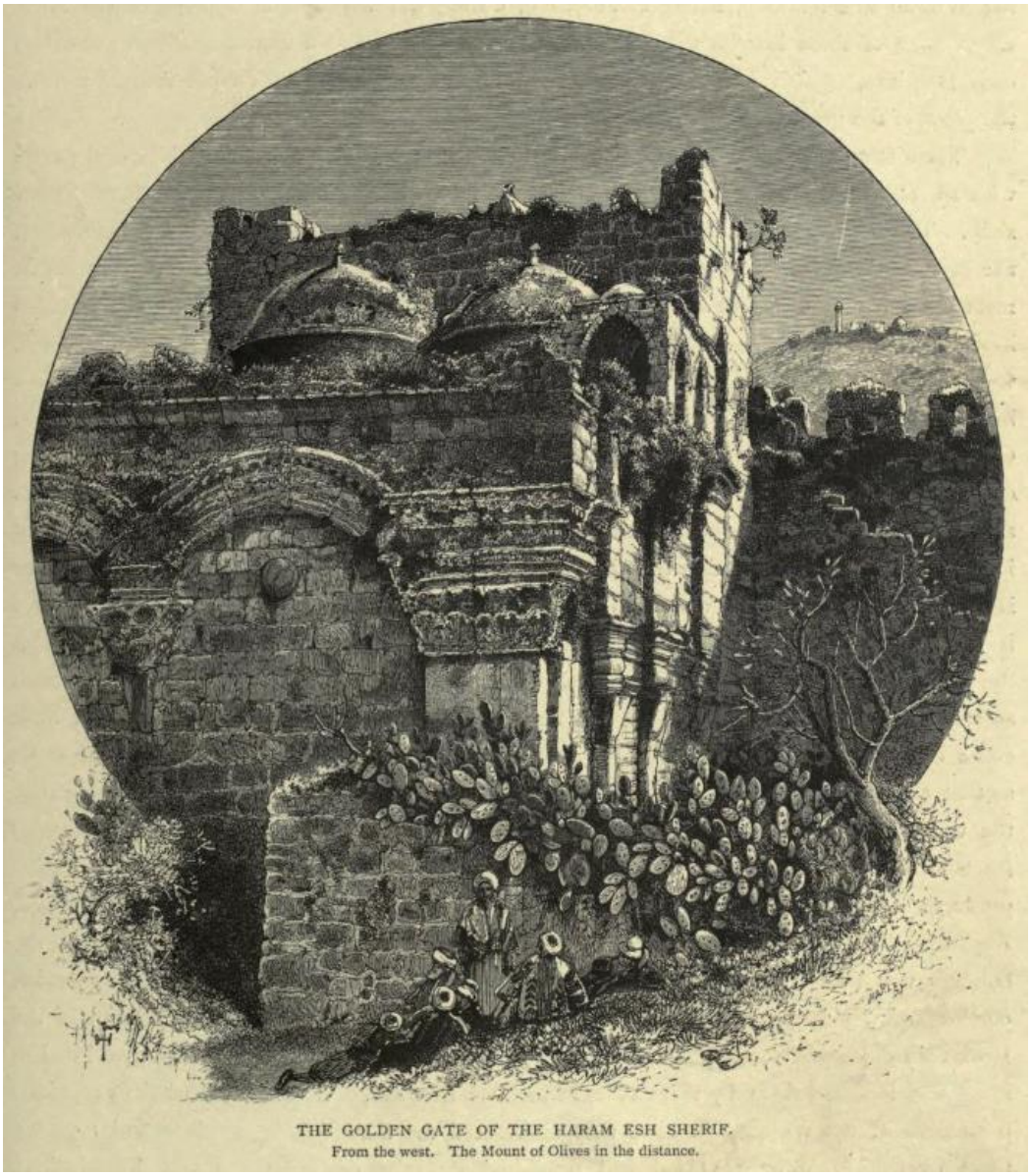


**Figure 8.1:**
**"The Golden Gate of the Haram esh Sherif",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, page 57**

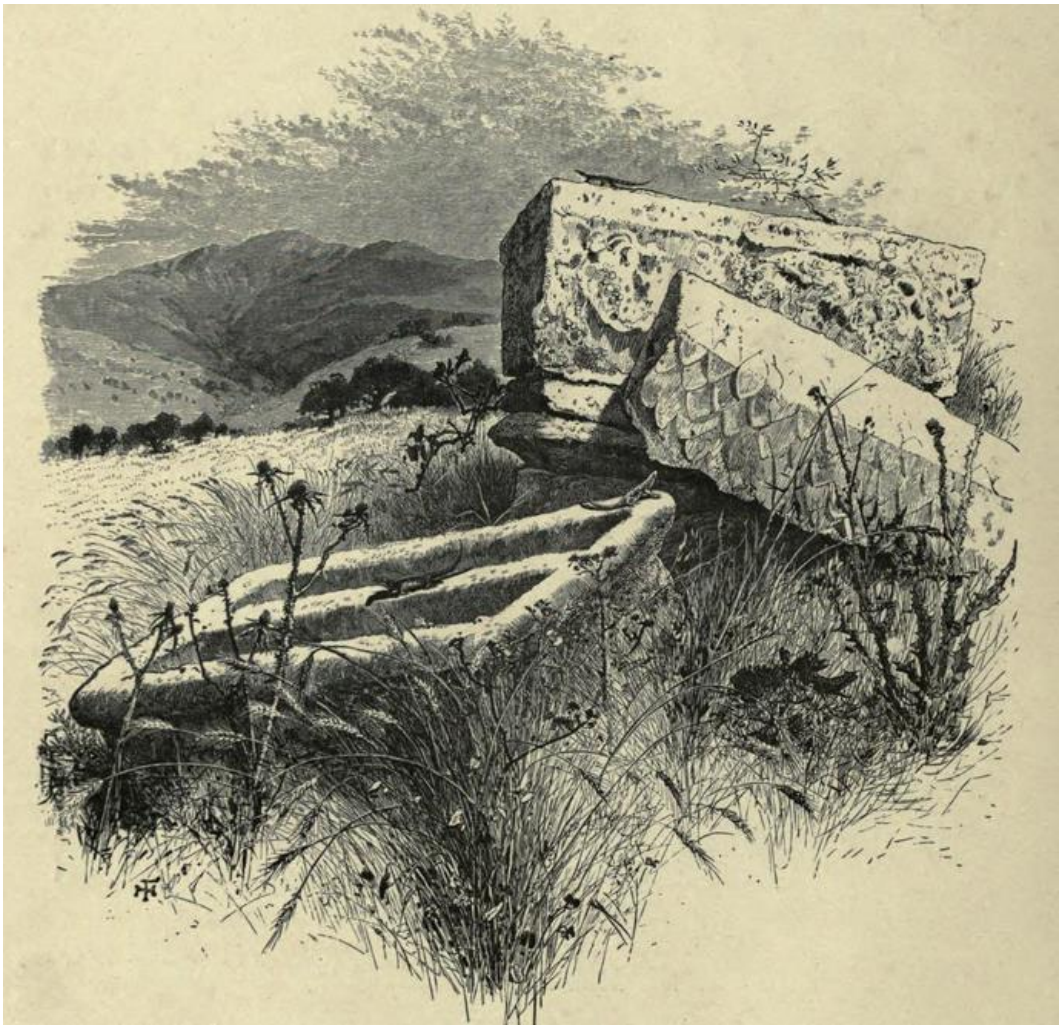

**Figure 8.2:**
**"Sarcophagi Among the Ruins of Kedesh Naphtali",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 2, page 98**

However, while the most important, the Bible was not the only textual conduit through which travellers viewed the Palestinian landscape. The Bible's ambiguous descriptions of locales, leading to controversies such as the search for the Holy Sepulchre's "true" site, meant traveller-writers made recourse to other texts, not necessarily more accurate, in the canon of Holy Land literature. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus was frequently referenced by traveller-writers who sought to picture a Palestine of a supposedly golden era around the time of Christ. William Henry Bartlett in his *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, stated one aim of his book was 'to body forth the description [of Jerusalem] by Josephus of her appearance in the time of Christ, the most deeply-interesting period of her history'. Bartlett continued that with 'means of comparison' between Josephus's Jerusalem and

the contemporary Jerusalem, 'we shall proceed with greater profit and interest to the investigation of the modern city', a comparison in which the latter inevitably lost.[26]

As Bartlett indicated, travellers thought of Josephus's Jerusalem as the highest point in the city's history, with a high degree of civilisation and a large population. To this mythical Jerusalem they made frequent reference in their representation of the city. For example, John Wilson quoted extensively (five almost unbroken pages of small type) from Josephus's descriptions of Jerusalem, particularly the Temple area, in his *The Lands of the Bible*. Josephus's writings, Wilson claimed, 'both illustrate, and are illustrated by, the various localities that the visitor is called to inspect at Jerusalem'.[27] In particular, it was Josephus's specific (yet unverifiable) descriptions of the appearance of the Herodian Temple, which allowed some travellers to envisage a reconstructed Jewish temple, in place of the Islamic structures of the Haram, as detailed in Chapter Four.

Despite Josephus's usefulness for Christian Zionist ideology, however, some travellers admitted his writings' unreliability. Bartlett himself had to acknowledge that Josephus's 'account is chargeable with gross exaggeration, as to measurements and numbers; and perhaps, also, as to the magnificence of particular buildings'.[28] James Neil had to disclaim in his *Palestine Re-Peopled* 'Josephus' much discredited statements' of the high figures given for Jerusalem's ancient population.[29] Still, in the early twentieth century, Ada Goodrich-Freer could still write (with tongue slightly in cheek) in her *Inner Jerusalem* that 'the Bible, Josephus and Baedeker together […] form a fairly sufficient library' for knowledge of Palestine.[30] Such a reading list indicated that, while travellers depended on prior literature to understand Palestine, this pool of texts could be extremely limited, leading to travellers' reproduction of very similar representations, creating a discursive "feedback loop".

Beyond these texts, there was also a long line of pilgrims who had left literary accounts of some form, which exerted an influence on some travellers' views. Many British travellers thought think of themselves as continuing the lineage of pilgrim-writer,

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[26] William Henry Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1844), pp. 18-19
[27] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (London: William White, 1847), Volume 1, p. 413
[28] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 27-28
[29] James Neil, *Palestine Re-Peopled; Or, Scattered Israel's Gathering. A Sign of the Times*. (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877), p. 10
[30] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), pp. v-vi

no matter how different the nature of Victorian travel to Palestine was to traditional Christian pilgrimage.[31] H. Rider Haggard demonstrated an awareness of the tradition of Palestine travel narratives, and placed himself within it, in his *A Winter Pilgrimage*:

> from the era of the "Bordeau Pilgrim" who wrote in the year 333, the very first of those who set on paper his impressions of the Holy Land, to this day, from time to time among those who have followed in his steps, some have left behind them accounts of what they saw and what befell them. The list is long. There are St. Sylvia, and the holy Paula; Arculfus and St. Wilibad, Mukadasi and Bernard the Wise; Sæwulf and the Abbot Daniel; Phocàs the Cretan and Theodoric; Felix Fabri; Sir John Mandeville, de la Brocquière and Maundrell – and so on down to Chateaubriand and our own times.[32]

Unusually, Rider Haggard included the tenth century Palestinian al-Maqdisi in his roster; however, travellers mainly saw themselves as falling within a Eurocentric and Christian tradition of writing on Palestine, and represented the land through an explicitly religious framework which admitted no legitimate place for Islam and Muslims in the Holy Land.

The final textual influence on traveller-writers was the most recent body of "pilgrims" in Palestine, their contemporaries, other travellers. In the second half of the nineteenth century, publishers produced practical guidebooks by and for Western travellers: John Murray's *Handbook* by Porter appeared in 1858, Baedecker's *Palestine and Syria*, in German in 1875 and subsequently in English, and Thomas Cook's *Tourist Handbook for Palestine and Syria* of 1876, all proved popular.[33] Similarly to Goodrich-Freer, Ross wrote in *The Cradle of Christianity* that while travelling in Palestine, 'in one pocket we have Baedeker and in the other the Bible'.[34] While native dragoman guides were still necessary as translators and navigators, and for other practicalities, the local knowledge (often represented as unreliable in the extreme) they could offer Western travellers on Palestine was superseded by the authority of the European guidebook. As per travellers' interest, guidebooks

[31] Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage: The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 39, No. 2 (April 2003), 131-148
[32] H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), pp. 2-3
[33] Edmund Bosworth, "The Land of Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period as Mirrored in Western Guide Books", *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1986), 36-44
[34] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), p. 42

emphasised ancient Palestine, presenting travel as journeys between Biblical sites, over the existing Palestine. Said notes the 'human tendency to fall back on a text when the uncertainties of travel in strange parts seem to threaten one's equanimity': it was the contemporary Palestine's alien-ness which drove travellers to seek reassurance from the familiar voices of prior travellers, well-versed in the Bible and Josephus, packaged in guidebooks.[35]

Literary travelogues, the genre discussed in this thesis, also influenced travellers. Bar-Yosef has noted that 'virtually every travel account or geographical study contained the obligatory list of those celebrated travellers who had visited Palestine previously, as well as long citations from their work'.[36] All traveller-writers were aware that they were writing in an established genre, with its "classics" which could be drawn upon to demonstrate to the author's awareness of recent writing and scholarship on Palestine. One notable exception was Alexander Kinglake's *Eothen*. In his introduction, Kinglake stated he had 'endeavoured to discard from [the book] all valuable matter derived from the works of others', and that his work was 'thoroughly free' from any geographical, historical and religious research; yet ironically, the popular *Eothen* became a reference point for subsequent travellers to Palestine.[37] Sometimes this referencing was of a close, even intimate nature. Kinglake was a close friend of Eliot Warburton; Kinglake quoted his letters in *Eothen*, which was dedicated to Warburton, whilst Warburton subsequently quoted from *Eothen* in *The Crescent and the Cross*; they reviewed each other's works in the press. While not all traveller-writers' relationships were so clearly entwined, they were cemented enough with intertextual citations to lead to, as Bar-Yosef states, 'the textual production of a self-contained community; or […] the creation of a community through the production of self-contained texts'.[38]

Many travelogues were replete with numerous travelogue quotations, private correspondence, and other written statements by other Western travellers, creating a dense web of intertextuality. Sometimes, reaching a part of their travel narrative, traveller-writers deferred to the supposedly superior knowledge or eloquence of one of their contemporaries, providing direct quotations in lieu of writing their own

[35] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 93
[36] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, p. 67
[37] Alexander W. Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home From the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), pp. v-vi
[38] Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, pp. 68-70

descriptions. For instance, Charles Wilson wrote in his contribution on Jerusalem in *Picturesque Palestine* that 'we cannot do better than quote the graphic words of Dean Stanley' on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, before including a five-page quotation from Stanley's work.[39] This viewing Palestine vicariously through the eyes of other travellers, done even by those who had themselves seen the sites in question, enforced the idea of a definitive, objective way of viewing Palestine, to be accepted by all travellers, and their readers. Said identified this process in Orientalist literature as 'the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large'.[40]

Certain travellers associated with Palestine "research" were afforded the status of "experts", their works cited and views of Biblical sites adopted by subsequent travellers. Most notable was Edward Robinson, whose *Biblical Researches in Palestine* opened an era of disputes over Palestine's holy sites, regardless of established local traditions. One site closely associated with Robinson visited by many travellers, where they could feel especially close to the Biblical past, was "Robinson's Arch" (fig. 8.3), a portion of an arch projecting from the Western Wall of the Haram. Robinson and subsequent travellers believed the arch to be part of a once-extant bridge to the Temple described by Josephus. Bartlett, just a few years later, wrote that the masonry was 'some of the most remarkable remains of antiquity in existence, not only proving to demonstration the identity of the ancient and modern wall of the temple enclosure, but also affording the same evidence of that of the ancient and modern Zion'. The sight of Robinson's Arch induced in Bartlett grandiose visions of the bridge 'across which Titus, after the destruction of the temple, addressed the Jews', of 'the age of Solomon' (though Bartlett, 'being unwilling to differ from the learned Dr. Robinson on this or any other point connected to the antiquities of Jerusalem', reluctantly admitted the arch was not likely to be so old), and of Christ, who 'must often have passed over it'. Bartlett contrasted his imagined Biblical Jerusalem with his opinion on the Jerusalem he saw around him:

> At that time it was often crowded with the wealthy and noble of the land, on their way from the proud palaces of the upper city to the temple. What a contrast is presented by its present state! the bridge broken down, the

[39] Charles W. Wilson, "Jerusalem" in Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine,* vol. 1, 1-120, p. 23
[40] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 20

> Jews shut out from the "holy and beautiful house" of their fathers, and the slopes of Zion hung with mean and ruinous houses, the abodes of poverty and wretchedness.[41]

**Figure 8.3:**
**"Robinson's Arch",**
***The Recovery of Jerusalem: A Narrative of Exploration and Discovery in the City and the Holy Land* by Charles Wilson and Charles Warren, frontispiece**

Whilst Robinson's influence on the interpretation of Palestine's landscape was supreme amongst Evangelicals, texts by British travellers also exerted a strong influence on their peers. Biblical "experts" and figures associated with the Palestine Exploration Fund, such as Conder and Stanley, were particularly important. Porter revealed at the outset of his *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* that he had made 'constant reference the magnificent publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund' whilst writing.[42] Kelman stated in his introduction that 'every chapter is indebted more or less, some chapters very deeply' to Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine* and the 1894

[41] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, pp. 136-140
[42] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), n.p.

*Historical Geography of the Holy Land* by George Adam Smith.[43] Proclaiming the influence of these eminent figures was a badge of honour. Not only the "discoveries" of Biblical archaeologists, but also the ideology underlying the Biblical archaeology movement, were influential. Stanley's aversion to established Christian sites in Palestine, and preference for wide open landscapes – 'the sky, the flowers, the trees, the fields, which suggested the Parables; the holy hills, which cannot be removed, but stand fast for ever' – became particularly widespread tropes.[44] Rider Haggard, among many, lamented that 'the tendency in the Holy Land is to cover every sacred site with some tawdry dome. I prefer the infinite arc of the skies, and for decoration the wild flowers and creeping ferns and grasses which grow amid the mouldering stones'.[45]

In the words of Walter Benjamin, quoted by Said, the 'overtaxing of the productive person in the name of […] the principle of "creativity"', was never a risk ran by traveller-writers in Palestine. As Said himself added, 'Orientalism is after all a system for citing works and authors'.[46] Travellers' representations were subject to a powerful web of intertextual influences, from the Bible, to Josephus's writings, to the accounts of Western travellers up to other traveller-writers and prominent authorities on Palestine's landscape which propagated a literalist Evangelical interpretation of the Bible. These texts prioritised the ancient past over the present, and imposed an exclusively Christian and Eurocentric outlook on Palestine, suited in a variety of ways to a proto-Zionist image of Palestine flourishing under historic Jewish occupancy and, implicitly, expectant of the "return" of the Jews to come. The remainder of this chapter investigates some specific examples of Palestine's representation as a land of the past.

[43] Kelman, *Holy Land*, p. vi
[44] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 473
[45] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 239
[46] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 13, 23

### II.I: 'Daily the More Confirmed': Palestine as Evidence for the Bible

One of the most notable of travellers' attitudes to Palestinian landscapes is that, through observing the land, thought of as physically embodying Biblical teachings, the Bible could be better understood. With this outlook, Palestine's real *raison d'être* was reduced to illustrating an Evangelical interpretation of Scripture. This sentiment was constantly expressed by travellers: to Isabel Burton 'nobody understands the Bible except those who have lived in Syria, with the Scriptures in their hand to study on the spot'; Rider Haggard claimed 'without seeing the country itself there is much of the Old Testament which it is difficult to understand', the same applicable to 'the New, if in a less degree'; and Kelman wrote that 'the more clearly we can gain the impression of places and events in Syria, the more reasonable and convincing will Christian faith become'.[47] This was an implicitly classist notion, as travel to Palestine remained possible only for the upper and middle classes, and even most of travelogues these fortunate travellers produced were out of the purchasing power of the working class. It was also a Eurocentric sentiment, as it applied only to Western Christian visitors with the "correct" interpretation of their faith, and not to the Muslims, non-Protestant Christians and Jews living in the midst of "Bible lands".

Kelman's appeal to reason in the quote above was significant. Palestine's topography was thought of as a kind of laboratory in which the Bible could be "tested"; this principle underpinned the enterprise of Biblical archaeology, and the amateur sleuthing of tourist-travellers wishing to reaffirm their faith. Stanley described Palestine's natural features as '"witnesses"' which could be 'cross-examined with the alleged facts and narratives'.[48] Tristram, who surveyed the Eastern Mediterranean's flora, fauna and geology to connect them to descriptions in the Bible, claimed for himself an 'unbiased determination to investigate facts'. The result of such 'unbiased determination' was always to reaffirm the – in Tristram's words – 'scrupulous accuracy' of the Bible.[49] Tristram's study of the region's nature to "prove" the Bible placed him within the growth of 'planetary consciousness', as Mary Louise Pratt has described the trend in travel writing in which Eurocentric 'classificatory schemes of natural history'

[47] Isabel Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 1, p. 41; Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 219; Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 3
[48] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. xix
[49] Tristram, *The Land of Israel*, p. 636

displaced the 'vernacular peasant knowledges' of the indigenous populations.[50] What Tristram did with Palestine's natural features, Biblical archaeologists did with the archaeology of the Holy Land. Where apparent contradictions were identified, such as the perceived incompatibility of the Holy Sepulchre with the description in the Bible, new sites such as the Garden Tomb could be "discovered" (in essence, invented) to reconcile with travellers' interpretation of the texts.

Underlying this pseudo-scientific approach towards Palestine was fear of the challenge posed to the literalist reading of the Bible by post-Enlightenment philosophical reason, and, even more seriously, scientific developments such as Darwin's theory of evolution.[51] James Finn referred to these challenges in a striking way in his *Byeways in Palestine*. Travelling in the Naqab Desert region, referred to in the Bible as Edom, after visiting Petra, Finn recorded reading a Bible passage narrating an incident in which two kings of Israel, Judah and Edom, were miraculously provided with water in the arid area after performing a sacrifice. Finn wrote that he 'remembered with pain the deplorable weakness and wickedness of the remarks on this event contained in Paine's "Age of Reason," and which I do not choose to repeat'. In his popular work, the Enlightenment thinker Thomas Paine (1737-1809) propounded a deistic view of Christianity rejecting miracles; he had suggested that the kings in Edom dug wells to find the water. Finn, however, reported finding natural springs in the area, allowing him to synthesise the "miracle" with the landscape of Palestine available for empirical experience: God had guided the kings to the water. Finn stressed the importance of Western topographic knowledge of Palestine for correctly interpreting the Bible:

> The most charitable opinion that one can entertain of such writers [i.e. Paine] is that they know nothing of the nature of the country under consideration. Thank God that the world at large, and that land in particular, is now better known than formerly, and, as a consequence, our evidences of the truth of the blessed Bible are daily the more confirmed. [52]

[50] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 5
[51] Sanbar, "Invention of the Holy Land", p. 292. Tristram was, in fact, a supporter of Darwin's ideas and tried to reconcile them with the Bible. Tristram was the first scientist to support Darwin in print, and his admission to the Royal Society in 1868 was supported by Darwin. Sacristy Press, "Synopsis: *Sacred Ibis: The Ornithology of Canon Henry Baker Tristram, DD, FRS* by W.G. Hale", https://www.sacristy.co.uk/books/history/henry-baker-tristram-ornithology# (accessed 13/10/2018)
[52] James Finn, *Byeways in Palestine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877 [1868]), pp. 321-322

This approach was also taken by Haskett Smith in his *Patrollers of Palestine*, a semi-novelised account of the journey of a group of tourists led by 'the Sheikh', a character with an apparently inexhaustible knowledge of Biblical Palestine, based on Smith himself. For every miracle associated with the locales the Sheikh takes his charges to, he has a rational explanation, usually derived from the landscape's features, sacrificing the Bible's miracles but maintaining its veracity. Smith/the Sheikh explains that while 'all my investigations and researches in this country have confirmed my faith in the historical accounts of the Old Testament in a marvellous degree', but that miracles, 'when rightly understood, are found to have been for the most part simple incidents resulting from the ordinary laws of Nature; but by the ignorant natives, who knew nothing about science or physics, they were regarded as supernatural wonders'.[53]

The notion that Palestine's landscape in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could prove the Bible's veracity rested on the assumption that the landscape had remained unchanged for two millennia. This produced a glaring contradiction: when it suited travellers to portray the land as ruined and deeply degraded from Biblical times, as will be explored further in Chapter Nine, they did so; at other points, they presented Palestine as unchanged, a landscape which would be familiar to Christ and the Old Testament patriarchs. As Isabel Burton wrote, the essence of the conception held by most traveller-writers was 'that Syria in 1874 is in no way changed from the Syria of 33'.[54] This could be spun positively or negatively, depending on the traveller-writers' discursive purpose. The view of Palestine as unchanging, both blessed as the Holy Land and backward as part of the Orient, was a convergence of a specific Biblical view of the land, and Said's definition of Orientalism's discourse of the Orient as 'lifeless, timeless, forceless'.[55]

The travelogues are littered with claims of the almost complete identity of the contemporary and ancient Biblical Palestinian landscapes. Palestine was conceived as a country in which all social developments, such as the establishment of human settlements, and events of historic importance, had taken place in the Biblical era, making Palestine a time capsule of the ancient past. As Elizabeth Charles wrote of the countryside around Jerusalem, 'no new roads have been made here since the days of

[53] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), pp. 320-322
[54] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, vol. 2, p. 42
[55] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 241

the Romans; probably no new sites fixed on since the days of the Canaanites'.[56] This was often expressed through the idea that travellers followed literally in the footsteps and saw the same landscape as Biblical figures. 'I felt indescribable pleasure in looking around me, and thinking that the eyes of our blessed Saviour had rested on the same objects I now beheld', wrote Herschell, 'that, perhaps, He had walked in the very place where I was now walking'.[57] Conder claimed that 'with a history so long and eventful, the land itself is unchanged, the brown plains, the grey barren hills, the wooded cliffs of Carmel, the gleaming sea, the snow-clad Hermon, are still the same that Christ once looked on'.[58] Treves wrote of the view as he travelled on the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem – itself often seen by travellers as a herald of modernity – that 'the primitive villages differ probably but little from the village of the days of Christ, if only the kerosene tins could be turned into water jars of earthenware', and even that 'it would not be incongruous if a marauding party of Philistines was to be seen hurrying across the plain'.[59]

As Treves illustrated, landscapes fired travellers' imaginations so much, that they could painted pictures of Biblical figures in the contemporary Palestinian scenery. It was in isolated rural rather than urban environments that travellers could use their imaginations this way, without the overt intrusion of contemporary indigenous Palestinian society. Viewing the Sea of Galilee, Stanley, usually the sober, meticulous, Biblical archaeologist, allowed himself to imagine 'the surface of the lake constantly dotted with the white sails of vessels, flying before the mountain gusts, as the beach sparkled with the houses and palaces, the synagogues and the temples of the Jewish or Roman inhabitants'.[60] Ross expressed similar sentiments, comparing Jerusalem where 'there is too great a buzz of life, to allow one quiet leisure to let the past speak' to the country around Tiberias where 'it is the past that peoples the scenes'.[61] Conder wrote of the countryside west of Jerusalem that the traveller 'will see in imagination the tall Philistines in their mail coats and bronze helmets flying before the despised herdsmen of Judah, armed only with goads or mattocks […] Judas [Maccabeus, the Jewish leader who revolted against the Greeks in the second century BC] and his

[56] Charles, *Wanderings over Bible Lands*, p. 64
[57] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 89
[58] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1880 [1878]), pp. 78-79
[59] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, pp. 23-24
[60] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 367
[61] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity* pp. 124-125

brethren stealing down in the darkness and massing their troops at early dawn hidden among the folds of the chalk downs south of Emmaus', and other figures from the Bible.[62]

These were private mental images belonging to Western travellers, not to Palestinian inhabitants of the locales. Biblical visions conjured by travellers were based on Western interpretations of Christian texts and Eurocentric modes of seeing. Goodrich-Freer wrote in her *In a Syrian Saddle* that 'picture after picture rose before our minds' as her group rode through Biblical Samaria, near the Palestinian village Sebastia, 'none more vivid than that of the days of its Greek grace, its Roman luxury, as interpreted by Herod'; yet she emphasised that this was only through a European education, 'only a strong effort of imagination, only familiarity with traditions of classic art and luxury', which could build such an image out of contemporary Palestinian scenery.[63] To many travellers, Palestine's ancient past was more alive than its present. As Walid Khalidi has written, Britain's later 'abdication of judgement' on Palestine during the Mandate era, was at 'rendered easier by the hiatus in the historical memory of the West as to what happened in the Holy Land in the two thousand years preceding the Balfour Declaration'.[64]

Whilst travellers were generally averse to cities, as detailed in Chapter Ten, when a human Palestinian presence was encountered in the landscape, the people too, effectively treated as part of the scenery, could also be used for "proving" the Bible. In addition to the view of the *fellahin* as Canaanites, travellers could happily place contemporary Palestinians directly in their vision of the past. For example, Alexander Boddy in his *Days in Galilee* boasted that at the Sea of Galilee he could 'without any effort', place the 'Oriental fisherman in their turbans and long picturesque robes' into 'a scene many centuries ago'.[65] Boddy's professed ease of imagining Palestinians into the Biblical era indicated travellers' belief in a continuity over almost two millennia. The whole of James Neil's *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* was built around this premise, with illustrations of contemporary life and landscapes in Palestine (fig. 8.4) solely for casting light on Biblical parables. As Neil explained in the book's

[62] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Mountains of Judah and Ephraim" in *Picturesque Palestine* vol. 1, 193-238, pp. 208-209
[63] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co.. 1905), pp. 209-210
[64] Walid Khalidi, "Introduction" in Walid Khalidi (ed.), *From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem Until 1948* (Berkeley: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 2005), xxi-lxxxii, p. xxiv
[65] Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 58

introduction, not only was 'life [in Palestine] unchanged from the earliest ages', but 'to fully understand the letter of the Written Word an intimate knowledge of everyday life in the Holy Land is absolutely necessary'.[66]

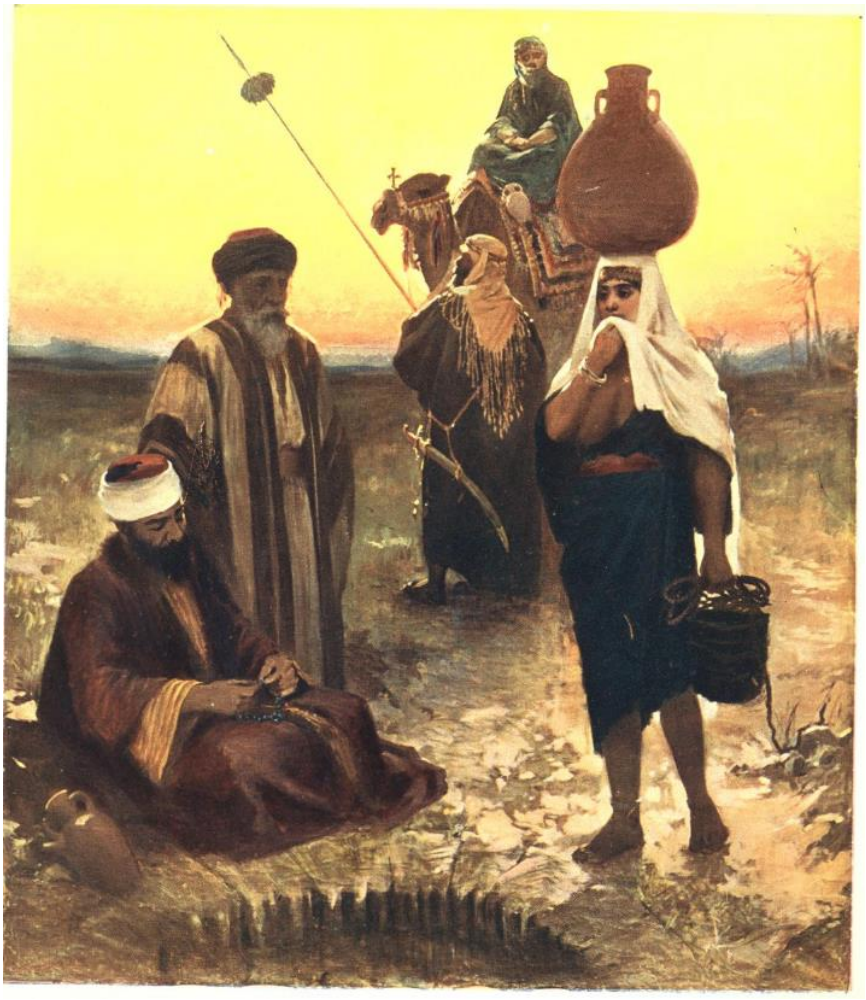

**Figure 8.4:**
**"Evening at the Well",**
***Everyday Life in the Holy Land* by James Neil,**
**frontispiece**

Travellers had a profound belief that Palestine's human geography, its villages, towns and cities, and religious shrines, was a distorted though topographically-precise representation of an ancient Hebrew past. Palestine was a palimpsest, in which the modern human settlements were in the same locations as localities in the Bible narrative, with the Palestinians living, in ignorance, in the same places, worshipping

[66] James Neil, *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1913), pp. vii, viii

at the same spots, and carrying out the same customs as the ancient Israelites. Conder wrote, in a passage summarising the views of many travellers:

> Immutability is the most striking law of Eastern life. The Bible becomes a living record to those who have heard in men's mouths the very phrases of the Bible characters. The name of every village almost is Hebrew, each stands on the great dust-heap into which the ancient buildings beneath its present cabins have crumbled, and the old necropolis is cut in rock, near the modern site. For thousands of years the people have gone on living in the same way and in the same place, venerating (perhaps in ignorance) the same shrines, building their fortresses on the same vantage-ground.[67]

If this premise was accepted, the Bible's geography could be "proved", its locations matched to their equivalents in modern Palestine. The apparent correspondence between Arabic place names and the Hebrew names in the Bible excited travellers, matching contemporary and ancient sites becoming a pillar of amateur Biblical archaeology. John Wilson wrote that 'in travelling through the land of Israel, my companions and myself were guided in the identification of Scripture sites, principally by the coincidence of the ancient Hebrew and the modern Arabic names'.[68]

As Palestine was thought of as a distorted version of its ancient state, its place names were considered distorted equivalents of Hebrew names. Conder's words demonstrated travellers' contempt for Palestinians and their habitations: the people have allowed the ancient structures to crumble into dust heaps, whilst they themselves live in 'cabins' and are in 'ignorance' of the heritage beneath their feet. Dixon wrote that 'the Arab and the Frank feel an equal attraction in the soil of Galilee. An Arab finds on it the bread and water for which he pines in the desert; a Frank can see in it the scenery and associations of his youth'.[69] While admitting that 'an Arab' could feel an 'equal attraction' to Palestine's soil as did the 'Frank' traveller (thus equating the indigenous people's connection to the land with that of Western visitors passing through), he implied that the relationship with the land in the case of the native people never surpassed that of the basic need for sustenance, whilst the European Christians could appreciate the spiritual meaning of the Holy Land. Palestinians' ignorance of the

[67] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 197-198
[68] Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. vii-ix
[69] Dixon, *Holy Land*, pp. 118-119

true significance of their home country, opposed to Western travellers' full knowledge of Palestine's history, might translate into the notion that they did not fully deserve their residency in the Holy Land. The travellers' search for, and frequent use of Hebrew place names, resembled the task of Israel's Naming Committee after 1948, once many Palestinian villages were ethnically cleansed.[70]

## II.II: 'Among the Ruins of the Past': Remnants of the Bible in Palestine's Landscape

One noticeable of travellers' representation of Palestine is the extent to which those locations were noted, described and valued according to their Biblical significance. Often the divine events of the Bible were contrasted with what the travellers' viewed as the uninteresting or abject condition of the existing sites; as Bartlett wrote, 'at every step, the past and present should be compared'.[71] Readers of the travelogues found explanations of why these sites were important in theological terms, but not accurate or detailed descriptions of the contemporary villages in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Frequently subject to this treatment were two villages near Jerusalem very often visited by travellers, Beitin (known to Western travellers as Bethel) and al-'Azariya (known as Bethany), and the village of Nain in the Galilee.

Beitin featured on numerous occasions in the Old Testament, most notably in Genesis as the site where Jacob dreams and is promised the Land of Canaan by God, a key moment in the narrative of the Israelites' possession of the territory. Travellers thus visited the village with interest, yet repeatedly described it in disappointed terms: to Macleod, Beitin was 'stones of confusion and emptiness' and a 'wretched cluster of huts', whilst Conder claimed that 'nothing more desolate or bleak can be well imagined' than the 'miserable hamlet of hall-ruinous stone huts', which nevertheless represented 'one of the most famous towns of Palestine'; Porter recorded that 'there is no trace of its pristine sacredness and glory there now'.[72] Herschell recorded that 'to me this place was especially interesting', yet added no detail to this minimal description of Beitin in his account.[73]

[70] Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006) pp. 225-226
[71] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, p. iv
[72] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 226, Conder, "Bethlehem and the North of Judæa", pp. 219-220; Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 146
[73] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, pp. 221-222

Al-'Azariya, the site of Christ's raising of Lazarus from the dead in the New Testament, had a similar fate. Porter described al-'Azariya as 'a small, poor, mountain hamlet, with nothing to charm except its seclusion, and nothing to interest save its associations'; Haskett Smith, who rejected the site's authenticity as the place of Lazarus's tomb, wrote almost vitriolically that the village was 'depressing in its squalor and disillusionment, and there is little or nothing to tempt the visitor to linger among the ragged and repulsive natives'; Goodrich-Freer recorded how her group 'hastened past the filthy hovels of the little village of Bethany' on their horses.[74] Showing that to Western travellers it was the biblical past and not the present that really mattered in Palestine, Macleod wrote that he 'was not disappointed with the appearance of Bethany. Had it been bare rock it would still have been holy ground'.[75]

Nain, the site of another resurrection miracle in the New Testament, was represented in like fashion. Tristram wrote that Nain was 'a miserable Moslem village, i.e. a few houses of mud and stone, with flat earth roofs, and doors three feet high, sprinkled here and there, without order or system, among the debris of former and better days', though he expressed satisfaction that a site associated with Christ had not been marked with 'the chapels and shrines which encumber and disfigure so many so-called "holy places"'.[76] Elizabeth Charles described the village as 'a few poor cabins, on the steep hill side', which had once, in the New Testament era, been 'a town with walls and gates, and multitudes of inhabitants'.[77] To Ross, 'the modern Nain can scarcely be called a village. There are only a few wretched-looking stone hovels tenanted by degraded-looking fellahîn'.[78] Again, it was Macleod who stated the Evangelical fascination with Bible sites most clearly: 'what has Nineveh or Babylon been to the world in comparison with Nain? And this is the wonder constantly suggested by the insignificant villages of Palestine, that their names have become parts, as it were, of the deepest experiences of the noblest persons of every land, and every age'.[79] This category, 'the noblest persons of every land', excluded the actual inhabitants of Nain, and the other villages of Palestine named in the Bible, Ross's 'degraded-looking fellahîn'.

[74] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 107; Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 285-286; Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 8
[75] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 175
[76] Tristram, *The Land of Israel*, p. 128
[77] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, pp. 204-205
[78] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 115
[79] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 115

It was not only the inhabited villages and functioning holy places which fascinated travellers, but also the ruins of past ages which were still visible above ground. Impressed by the ruins of Egypt, of Baalbek, Palmyra and Petra, travellers expecting to find similar glories relating to the Biblical past in Palestine, and mentally constructed them out of the somewhat less grandiose remains they found. Every crumbled wall and half-buried column was described at length, conjectured upon, and related to ancient history. It was *de rigeur* for traveller-writers to describe Palestine as a 'land of ruins', or even, as Elizabeth Charles asserted, 'not a land of ruins, but of ruinous heaps'.[80]

One reason for travellers' focus on the visible remnants of past ages above ground, was that those engaged in the enterprise of Biblical archaeology claimed there were many obstacles to proper investigations below ground. In particular, the obstinacy of the Ottomans and Islamic superstitions were accused of preventing subterranean scientific exploration. In an account of the Palestine Exploration Fund's excavations he led alongside Charles Wilson in the 1860s, Charles Warren reported that the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem informed him that 'it was perfectly absurd for us to come and dig about Jerusalem, when the Moslem traditions gave every information'.[81] Warren raised more serious objections to the authorities in his *Underground Jerusalem*, subtitled *An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained*, including the irate opposition of the shaikh of the Haram to excavations beneath it, and the brief arrest of Warren's British assistant. Ultimately, he claimed that all the people of Palestine shared an illogical aversion to scientific excavation: 'the mere act of digging on the part of a Frank is repugnant to the sentiments of the people: he may measure, survey, talk, without raising their passions, but he cannot excavate without causing uneasiness in their minds'.[82] This was one more way in which Palestinians were cast as the enemies of "progress".

More digs were permitted by the Ottomans over time, such as the Tel Ta'anakh excavations by the German Biblical archaeologist Ernst Sellin (1867-1946), which Goodrich-Freer observed in the early twentieth century.[83] However, Haskett Smith

[80] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 290
[81] Charles Warren, "Excavations at Jerusalem" in Walter Morrison (ed.), *The Recovery of Jerusalem: A Narrative of Exploration and Discovery in the City and the Holy Land* (London: Richard Bentley, 1871), 35-336, p. 37
[82] Charles Warren, *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained.* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1876), p. 551
[83] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 233

could still complain in 1906 of 'a very fanatical sect of Moslems, who are extremely jealous of anyone visiting the spot, and who absolutely refuse to allow any excavations to be made' at the traditional site of David's tomb in Jerusalem.[84] Archaeology thus fuelled desire for a more enlightened Western power removing Palestine from Ottoman control, and removing all barriers to knowledge of the Holy Land. Warren, one of the most colonisation-minded of Palestine travellers (see Chapter Eleven), at the end of his book on his archaeological (mis)adventures, turned to the subject of European competition for influence in Palestine, and asked not even rhetorically, 'will not those who love Palestine, love freedom, justice, the Bible, learn to look upon the country as one which may shortly be in the market? Will not they look about and make preparations, and discuss the question?' An appeal to Britain to 'be on the alert and watch' for an opportunity to advance a claim on Palestine, might appear to be a strange way to end a book on archaeology.[85] But the obsession with Palestine's Biblical past led to dreams of its colonised future.

Until then, however, the relative limitation of Biblical research to the ruins on the surface which could be seen by all, enabled a democratisation of the field, as amateur and tourist travellers – and even their readership back in Britain – could let their imaginations run as far as Biblical scholars could. As Sarah Kochav writes, the field was open 'not only by travellers and excavators, but also by the enthusiastic tourist and the armchair explorer'.[86] Travellers with no archaeological knowledge beyond that of the ordinary upper- or middle-class Victorian with an interest in the Holy Land, might record their "discovery" of a (usually ancient Jewish) tomb, an oil press, or some other configuration of stones for which they might hypothesise an origin in antiquity.[87] Stanley summarised travellers' attitude towards ruins in Palestine:

> Above all other countries in the world, it is a *Land of Ruins* [emphasis in the original] […] there is no country in which they are so numerous, none in which they bear so large a proportion to the villages and towns still in existence. In Judea it is hardly an exaggeration to say that whilst for miles and miles there is no appearance of present life or habitation,

[84] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 95
[85] Warren, *Underground Jerusalem*, p. 559
[86] Sarah Kochav, "The Search for a Protestant Holy Sepulchre: The Garden Tomb in Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (April 1995), 278-301, p. 281
[87] See for example Laurence Oliphant on the 'ancient olive-mills [of which Oliphant claimed to find 'more than a dozen'] and wine presses, often in a very perfect state of preservation, tombs and cisterns' he 'found' on Mount Carmel. Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), pp. 94-95

> except the occasional goat-herd on the hillside, or gathering of women at the wells, there is yet hardly a hill-top of the many within sight, which is not covered by the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages.

The focus on ruins influenced Western travellers' views of Palestine in several ways. Firstly, as has already been illustrated, they served to throw back travellers' minds to the past, something which needed little prompting; yet the Bible never seemed more alive to travellers than when they were confronted with the abandoned ruins of antiquity.

Secondly, ruins reinforced travellers' belief that Palestine, under Islamic rule in general and Ottoman rule in particular, was a land only of past glories, without any real present to speak of. Stanley claimed that 'the general fact of the ruins of Palestine […] deepens and confirms, if it does not create, the impression of age and decay which belongs to almost every view of Palestine, and invests it with an appearance which can be called by no other name than venerable'.[88] All Palestine, in Conder's words 'this ruined land', was seen as a ruin.[89] This matched travellers' expectations of the Holy Land; they preferred the sight of a nondescript ruin where a Biblical town had – they believed – existed, to a functioning non-Protestant church marking a site associated with Christ. This emphasised the Judeo-Christian past, and obscured the contemporary society of Palestine. It also had implications for Western colonisation or Jewish "return" to Palestine since the corollary of Palestine's domination ruins was expected as a vigorous external colonising force, which could "rebuild" Palestine consistent with Evangelical interpretations of prophecy. Passing by the ruins of Banias in today's Golan Heights, and misidentifying the pagan Hellenistic site as the Biblical city Dan, Herschell quoted a prophecy from the Book of Isiah upon seeing 'the many broken pillars and fragments of stone which protrude from the earth, calling with mute eloquence on the passerby to "rebuild the old wastes!"'[90]

Ruins of abandoned settlements suggested a third aspect of Evangelical thinking on Palestine: a Biblical curse on the land and the Jewish people. Travellers believed this was a result of the deviations of the ancient Israelites, culminating in their rejection of Christ, deeply influencing missionary efforts to convert the Jews, and travellers' attitudes towards the Jews in Palestine, as discussed in Chapter Six. Porter,

[88] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 117-118
[89] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 4
[90] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-land*, p. 208

for example, recorded his thoughts at what he believed was the Biblical site of Geba, near Beitin: 'from the little tower of Geba no less than nine ruined towns and villages were pointed out to me. I could not fail to call to mind here, as I did on many another spot in Palestine, the striking prophetic judgments pronounced by Moses long, long centuries ago'.[91] Similarly, Kelman described 'Jericho, squatting sordidly amid the ruins of its ancient Hellenism', its ruin being evidence that 'every part of the land is being judged and is bearing the punishment of sin'. The Palestine represented by Kelman was a dark and gothic one of 'ancient Jewish graves' of which 'nothing could be gloomier', abandoned khans, bridges and castles, all 'the ghostly elements in this land of ruins', and 'gloom is so ominous, as to be at times suggestive of a supernatural curse that broods upon everything with its depressing weight'.[92]

This was an understanding of the land very different to that which local Palestinians may have had at the time, and have now. The human rights activist and dedicated walker Raja Shehadeh has described this in his *Palestinian Walks*, in many ways a Palestinian riposte to the older Western travel narratives. In an inversion of travellers' view of a curse on Palestine, Shehadeh writes that 'perhaps the curse of Palestine is its centrality to the West's historical and biblical imagination. The landscape is thus cut to match the grim events recorded there'. Shehadeh writes of 'the hills I have so loved' in the West Bank around Jerusalem, before quoting William Thackeray's *Notes of a Journey* on the same subject, 'a landscape unspeakably ghastly and desolate', where 'there is not a spot at which you look, but some violent deed has been done there' in the Biblical narrative. Shehadeh comments understandably, and as part of an indigenous attempt to define the Palestinians' country on the Palestinians' own terms, that 'I like to think of my relationship to the land, where I have always lived, as immediate and not experienced through the veil of words written about it, often through the veil of distortion'.[93]

In the nineteenth century, ruins summoned up visions of the bloody conflicts of the Bible and subsequent conquests, Palestine's history appearing as a long line of invasions, erasing the indigenous society which persisted throughout. On a journey through the Galilee, Laurence Oliphant wrote in his *Haifa* that 'the whole ground over which we ride has been from time immemorial the scene of bloody warfare, and it is

[91] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. 160
[92] Kelman and Fulleylove, pp. 231, 265, 272
[93] Raja Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* (London: Profile Books, 2008), pp. xii-xiii

not impossible, considering how events are shaping themselves in the East, that it may become so again'.[94] To Evangelical travellers, this was a cycle which could only be broken by Palestine's capture by a Protestant power and the "return" of the Jews, to restore their conception of Palestine's ancient prosperity.

Fourthly, travellers viewed the ruins as confirmation of the Bible's descriptions, again leading them to forecast a settler-colonial future for Palestine. Travellers interpreted the ruins as remains of sites mentioned in the Bible 'when every hill was crowned with a flourishing town or village', which they believed had much larger populations than most Palestinian villages existing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Stanley explained that the 'countless ruins of Palestine' showed 'not only that "Syria might support tenfold its present population, and bring forth tenfold its present produce," but that it actually did so'.[95] This cast Biblical time as Palestine's golden age, the Israelites as divinely inspired builders and farmers in contrast to the contemporary *fellahin*, and suggested future achievements which the Jewish "return" might accomplish. This idea was fed by the inflated population figures given by ancient chroniclers such as Josephus and the first-century Greek geographer Strabo, whose figure of 'ten millions of inhabitants' for Palestine, against its 'one million and a half' in the nineteenth century, led Finn to conclude that 'the prophecies of Holy Scripture that the land should become void of inhabitants are fulfilled in every direction'.[96]

With the supposed evidence of prosperous ancient settlements around the country, British travellers, with their historic ties to settler colonial projects around the world, viewed the existing patterns of settlement and agriculture in Palestine as an almost criminal waste of potential. When travellers such as Elizabeth Charles described coming across 'traces of more energetic and prosperous races' than existing Palestinian communities, such as 'tanks hewn in the rock for rain-water' and 'fine old terraces for vines and olives, broken in many places and bared by the winter torrents', they were not only providing accounts of what they perceived as ancient Jewish remains, but hinting at what the land might look like after the Jewish "return".[97] Viewing the landscape of Mount Carmel from his home in a Druze village, Oliphant cast his imagination back to the Byzantine era; he contrasted his image of 'hanging

[94] Oliphant, *Haifa,* p. 120
[95] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 118-120
[96] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 2, p. 188
[97] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, pp. 162-163

forests and terraced vineyards, its columned temples, its teeming population' with the existing 'mud-built village, ruined terraces, naked hills, and unpeopled valleys'. Yet this led him to thoughts of the future, and his own role in bringing about colonisation. Messianically, he expressed his belief that 'be mine the task, however feebly, to labour for the restoration of this land to its former condition of fruitfulness and abundance'.[98]

Conder, anticipating later Zionist discourse on Palestine being largely deserted before the arrival of Jewish immigrants and waiting for them to unlock its latent agricultural potential, as well as referencing European fears of overpopulation which served to justify settler colonialism, argued that 'it seems impossible that when less desirable regions are being occupied by the overflowing population of Europe, Palestine alone should remain empty'.[99] Drawing on the same notion of Palestine as a super-productive but untapped and under-inhabited land, Chaim Weizmann told a Soviet diplomat, 'give me the land occupied by a million Arabs, and I will easily settle five times that number of Jews on it'.[100] This fallacious and racist argument was inherited by the Zionist movement from earlier Evangelical travellers, who in turn based it on their interpretation of the Bible and unreliable ancient records.

Fifthly, the focus on ruins led travellers to attack the indigenous population of Palestine. Not considered as a people capable of creating their own great art, architecture, or civilisation, they were the *fellahin* of Beitin, al-'Azariya and Nain living amongst ruins the importance of which they had no comprehension, in the words of Goodrich-Freer 'the Arab, who for thirteen hundred years has lived among the ruins of the past'.[101] This contrast of present Palestinians with the ancient past could descend into vitriolic racism. To Haskett Smith, writing of Ariha near ancient Jericho's ruins, the contemporary village was 'a miserable collection of mud hovels inhabited by a people of the lowest and most degraded type' and even a 'modern pollution of the natural beauty which surrounds it', compared to 'the time-honoured name of its famous predecessors'.[102] Travellers were reluctant to admit that the culture of the indigenous people of the Eastern Mediterranean could create its own enduring monuments: when Goodrich-Freer visited the Qasr al-Mshatta, an Umayyad-era palace east of the

[98] Laurence Oliphant, "Life in a Druse Village", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 136, No. 830 (December 1884), 705-715, p. 715
[99] Claude Reignier Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 149, No. 908 (June 1891), 856-870, p. 868
[100] Joseph Massad, "Against Self-Determination", *Humanity Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 2018), 161-191, p. 178
[101] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 47
[102] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 300

Jordan, she described 'this monument of a race to which we could give no name, of a purpose at which we could not even guess, of aspirations never fulfilled, hopes never realised'.[103] That the name of this race might be the Arabs, and that they were the forebears of the people who continued to inhabit the region, was apparently out of the question. Real civilisation in the region was something afforded only to the Israelites, Greeks, Romans and later Crusader invaders, categorically excluding the native people since the arrival of Islam in the seventh century. As Keith Whitelam has noted in his critique of Biblical archaeology *The Invention of Ancient Israel*, the discipline has continued to overlook non-Jewish archaeology, and ignore anything which does not strictly accord to the dominant interpretations of the Bible narrative.[104]

Rather than creative builders, or even passive dwellers amongst the ruins, travellers portrayed the inhabitants of Palestine as actually destructive towards the past. Goodrich-Freer averred that 'hardly a ruin remains in Syria where Moslem zeal has not destroyed its sculptured imagery'.[105] Oliphant complained of locals using stones from ruins as building materials for their own homes, claiming that when he visited the site of an ancient synagogue on Mount Carmel, he was disappointed to find that 'the inhabitants of a Moslem village about two miles distant had within the last decade made a clean sweep of all these most interesting remains'.[106] Kelman similarly lambasted the 'the lazy builders who have constructed their modern dwellings out of stolen fragments of ruins'.[107] Hidden in these accusations, aside from Orientalist racism in casting Palestinians as purely destructive and ignorant, was a critique of the authorities. In an era when the heritage of much of the world was being gathered in the museums of the colonial metropoles, travellers accused the Ottomans of failing to protect Palestine's ancient heritage and preventing Western archaeologists from carrying out excavations.

Finally, the fascination with ruins focused travellers' attention on the European influence on Palestine's history. Aside from ancient Biblical ruins, remnants of historic European occupations also captured travellers' attentions. Ross expressed this clearly:

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[103] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 79
[104] See Keith W. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (London: Routledge, 1996)
[105] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 80
[106] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 95
[107] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 125-126

> Of all the rulers who have successively been in possession […] none have left such an abiding mark upon the country as the Crusaders and the Romans. The traveller has only to look at the grandeur and number of their ruined buildings to know what a powerful influence they wielded.

In particular, Ross claimed that ruins of Crusader churches were in 'striking contrast to the "hugger-mugger" Turkish buildings by which they are surrounded', whilst Crusader castles were 'a monument to the military strength of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem'.[108] Charles Biggs wrote similarly in his *Six Months in Jerusalem*, that the Crusaders had 'covered the land with fortresses and churches which are remarkable monuments of devotion'.[109] Kelman averred that the Crusaders' 'are the footprints most visible throughout the land. Everything in Syria has felt the touch of them and retained its mark'.[110] Compared to ruins left by European conquerors, the society of the indigenous people over centuries was made to fade into insignificance. Palestine was valued for its place in European history: ruins could be used to show the military and artistic achievements of past European occupations, with an implicit question of a future European occupation.

**II.III: 'A Strange Reversal of the Parables': Representations of the Crusades**

Travellers' representations of the Crusades, a European occupation long after the Biblical period, yet nevertheless an integral part of Holy Land mythology, deserve further attention. Just as stories from the Bible seemed to come alive in the places travellers identified with Biblical locales, certain sites also triggered thoughts of the Medieval struggle between European Christendom and Islamic forces for Palestine, giving traveller-writers the excuse to retell Crusading legends. Travellers encountered remnants of the Crusader period in Palestine's ruined churches and fortresses, and locations connected with the Crusades' key events, notably Jerusalem, capital of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem from 1099 to 1187, the Horns of Hattin in the Galilee where Saladin defeated the Crusader armies in 1187, and 'Akka or Acre, the Crusader capital from 1192 to 1291; as Mary Rogers stated, 'no city in Syria or Palestine so completely carries one back in fancy to Crusading and feudal times as does this city

[108] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 34
[109] Charles Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem: Impressions of the Work of England in and for the Holy City* (London: Mowbray and Co., 1896), p. 48
[110] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 182

of 'Akka'.[111] As Western travellers viewed Palestine as a land virtually without a present, the Crusades appeared as the last events of major importance. As Stanley reflected on viewing the ruined Crusader fortress at Ascalon, the Crusades were 'the last gleam of history which has thrown its light over the plains of Philistia'.[112]

It might be expected that the travellers of the nineteenth century 'Peaceful Crusade' might have empathised with the original Crusaders, European Christians and precursors of the colonial enterprise. The Crusades were a popular subject in nineteenth century literature, notably in the novels of Walter Scott (1771-1832) and *Tancred* (1847) by Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), a work which did much to fire the Peaceful Crusade decades before its author served as Prime Minister at the height of the Eastern Question. As Patrick Brantlinger has pointed out, behind 'such romantic celebrations of chivalry and the crusades' as were found in these novels 'lie the roots of the late Victorian and Edwardian insistence on the relation between the Empire and gentlemanly valour'.[113] Yet while travellers may have emulated the Crusaders as Europeans journeying to the Holy Land, admired their ruins, shared their antipathy towards Islam (if not in an overtly violent way), and hoped for Palestine's occupation by a Christian power, their representations of the Crusaders were much more nuanced.

As noted above, many travellers expressed admiration for the ruins of Crusader buildings across Palestine, emphasising Europe's historical presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Crusaders received admiration from some British travellers, swept up by notions of chivalry and romance, despite the slaughter which accompanied them. Kelman described the Crusades as 'perhaps the most picturesque period in all history', argued that it was 'obviously genuine religious enthusiasm' which motivated the Crusaders, and celebrated the military prowess of 'these strong and fearless soldiers of the Cross'.[114] Arthur Copping in his *A Journalist in the Holy Land* similarly wrote of the Crusades' 'glamour of mediaeval romance', claiming with overblown pathos that 'fed by the blood of the Crusaders, chivalry blossomed at Acre'.[115] J.E. Hanauer paid homage to one of the central figures of the early Crusader period in his

[111] Mary Eliza Rogers, "Acre, the Key of Palestine" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 3, 73-90, pp. 72-73
[112] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 257
[113] Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 137
[114] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, pp. 181, 186, 190
[115] Arthur E. Copping, *A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), p. 85

*Walks About Jerusalem*. Hanauer noted that until the fire of 1808 which damaged the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the grave of Godfrey de Bouillon, briefly first Crusader ruler of Jerusalem from 1099 to 1100, was marked there. Hanauer paid homage to Godrey's choice to 'not, in his humble piety, accept the royal title, and [refusal] to wear a kingly diadem in the city where his Saviour had worn a crown of thorns'. Hanauer celebrated that 'surrounded as we are on this spot by sites of doubtful genuineness, and by absurd traditions, it does one good to realize that one is standing beside an actually historic site commemorating a man of Godfrey's character'.[116] This was despite Godfrey's capture of Jerusalem was followed by, in the words of Amin Maalouf, 'an ineffable orgy of killing', and his brutal assault on the farmlands of Ghuta around Damascus, which 'became a scene of desolation' before Godfrey's death whilst besieging 'Akka.[117]

Yet outnumbering these positive evaluations were negative, even scathing, representations of the Crusaders and their motives. It was often in the context of the Crusades that traveller-writers provided some rare positive depictions of Muslims, in particular the twelfth-century Kurdish leader of the Muslim forces against the Crusaders, Salah ad-Din or Saladin. To some travellers, Salah ad-Din and the Muslim armies best represented the ideals of chivalry, not the Crusaders. It was easier to celebrate the Muslims and their leader of the Middle Ages, than to write positively of the living Muslims of Palestine. As Thackeray confessed, 'in the Crusades my wicked sympathies have always been with the Turks [i.e. Muslims]', the Arab/Islamic forces being 'the best Christians of the two; more humane, less brutally presumptuous about their own merits, and more generous in esteeming their neighbours', and 'Saladin […] a pearl of refinement compared to the brutal beef-eating Richard [Richard I of England]'.[118] Similarly, Macleod wrote of 'the brave and generous Saladeen' who was 'more righteous' than the Crusaders.[119] When describing Salah ad-Din's grave in Damascus, Mary Rogers and the Swiss Protestant theologian Philip Schaff (1819-1893), wrote that the Muslim leader 'puts to shame many a Christian knight'. Simultaneously denigrating Islam while celebrating Salah ad-Din, they claimed that

[116] J.E. Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, 1910), pp. 54-55
[117] Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* (London: Saqi Books, 2006), pp. 51, 61
[118] William Makepeace Thackeray [anonymous], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), p. 143
[119] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 258

'some men are much better, some much worse, than their creed', and while 'the Crusaders, when they stood face to face with the Muslims, often felt themselves in the presence of a higher civilisation', ultimately their failure owed to the Europeans' corruption by the Orient, and 'the Christian knights ended with imitating the Muslim robbers'.[120]

Antipathy towards the Crusades was often expressed from a theological perspective. Many travellers, taking their lead from Biblical archaeologists, blamed Crusaders for the propagation of supposedly false sites around Palestine, which the indigenous Christian populace continued to venerate, but which were described with opprobrium by European Protestants, as discussed in Chapter Five.[121] Beyond this, Victorian Evangelicals were highly critical of the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, preventing them from feeling much sense of shared identity with the Crusaders. With missionary activity and the "saving of souls" at the heart of Evangelical Protestantism (and arguments for the "civilising" role of imperialism), travellers viewed with distaste the violent conquest of the Crusades which were not accompanied by conversion efforts towards the non-Christians of the Eastern Mediterranean. Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés have noted the differences between pilgrimage and Crusade, and the concept of Christian mission from the late Middle Ages onwards: 'there was no longer an enemy to fight, but many to convert, in a world which still had a centre in Jerusalem but also vast new terrains to map, explore and describe for the sake of both profit and religion'.[122] Travellers' rejection of the Crusaders implied a new form of colonialism which could draw on a religious discourse for moral justification, as Elizabeth Charles stated clearly:

> What a strange reversal of the parables the Crusades were! – a Pilgrim's Progress read the wrong way; the body making a pilgrimage to a material Jerusalem; the Christian armour, mail of steel, instead of faith, and the word of God, and prayer; the Christian warfare against the bodies of Moslems, instead of against fleshly lusts and wicked spirits.[123]

Some travellers expressed resentment at the Crusades for apparently tarnishing Christianity in the eyes of the local people, and setting back the West in an ongoing

[120] Philip Schaff and Mary Eliza Rogers, "Damascus" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 2, 143-190, p. 180
[121] See also Conder, "The Mountains of Judah and Ephraim", p. 206
[122] Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Introduction", in Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 1-56, p.33
[123] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 149

struggle for primacy in the Holy Land. Ross argued that 'it was due to [the Crusaders'] lack of Christianity that they finally failed in their enterprise and that Palestine was given over to the Mohammedans, in whose possession it has remained ever since'.[124]

Traveller-writers did not mince their words. In his *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan*, Porter described the Crusades as 'perhaps the most painful exhibition of mingled chivalry, fanaticism, and folly the world has witnessed', in which 'millions perished for an insane idea'.[125] Yet most critiques by Western travellers demonstrated antipathy towards the Crusades not because they were a manifestation of violent imperialism, but because the Crusaders failed to establish a lasting European dominance in Palestine. The cardinal sin of the Crusaders was that they lost the fight between 'the crescent and the cross'. Some travellers stressed the need to learn the lessons of the Crusades' failure, so any future attempt at colonising Palestine might be more successful; as Finn stated in an address to the Jerusalem Literary Society, a group of European expatriates in Jerusalem he gathered around himself, 'the history of this [Crusader] kingdom deserves very serious attention, as well in the principles and motives from which it originated, as in its shattered and brief continuance and in its instructive wreck'.[126] Alongside his laudatory comments on the Crusaders already noted above, Kelman noted that the Crusades had been 'commercially […] disastrous', a significant criticism when colonialism and settler colonialism were becoming increasingly valued for the financial benefits they brought to the colonial metropoles.[127] In the nineteenth century, when the West already had substantial economic interests in Palestine, any colonisation would have to be a crusade of the banker as well as the soldier.[128]

Finally, the Crusades posed questions of Palestine's future and the West's involvement in it. What the Crusades seemed to prove to Western travellers was that it was possible for the West to gain supremacy over Palestine, though a more sustainable method than military force alone was needed. In the shadow of the Eastern Question, and after the confrontations of 1799 and 1840 which highlighted the

[124] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 221
[125] Josias Leslie Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan: Scenes of the Early Life and Labours of OUR LORD* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1889), p. 238
[126] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 96
[127] Kelman, *Holy Land*, p. 181. Also see Tadhg Foley, "'An Unknown and Feeble Body': How Settler Colonialism was Theorised in the Nineteenth Century" in Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (eds.), *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 10-27
[128] For European economic interests in late Ottoman Palestine, see Alexander Scholch, *Palestine in Transformation, 1856-1882: Studies in Social, Economic and Political Development* (Berkeley: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1993)

Ottomans' weakness, some travellers began to view the Crusades as unfinished business rather than long-dead history. At 'Akka in particular, scene of both the Crusaders' last stand in Palestine and more recent battles in which British involvement had been key, the idea of a contemporary crusade occurred to some. Conder, for instance, mused that 'should Palestine […] be destined to form the theatre of future military operations, the name of Acre will no doubt be often heard again in English mouths'.[129]

Decades before, shortly after 1840 when the Ottomans relied on British naval might to recapture Palestine from Egyptian occupation, Warburton posed the question, 'is the old crusading spirit so dead amongst us, that no one will now bear the banner of the Cross once more to Palestine in a purer cause?'[130] In Jerusalem, commenting on the Golden Gate of the Haram compound which Salah ad-Din had sealed possibly to prevent the entry of Crusader forces, Bartlett mused whether 'though the spirit of the Crusaders is dead, yet it is not improbable, that, according to the Turkish tradition, the Golden Gate may yet open some day to the entry of their descendants'.[131] At the turn of the twentieth century, Rider Haggard hinted at a different course of events, and a different colonising power. 'One may sympathise with the objects of the Crusaders', Haggard wrote; 'I do myself, and even, I confess, should suffer no sorrow if any of the Christian powers were moved to take the Moslem by his turban and propel him out of the small district so sacred' to the Christian world. However, wary of Catholic and Orthodox rivalry over Palestine's holy sites, he admitted, 'I should prefer that it was a Protestant power'; failing that, perhaps things 'would fare better at the hands of the Jews'.[132]

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Travellers viewed Palestine's landscape as a palimpsest of ages, from Biblical time, through invasions, occupations and the Crusades, until the present, which in Western eyes had nothing to match the grandeur of the past. Relying on the Bible and a web of other textual influences, including the genre of Holy Land travelogues, traveller-

[129] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 204
[130] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, p. 247
[131] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, p. 148
[132] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 252

writers created a powerful and dominant discourse which valued the past, a Judeo-Christian mythology through an Evangelical lens, at the present's expense, and ascribing a significance to Palestine which could only be appreciated through a Eurocentric frame of reference. Representation of Palestine as a land fossilised in Biblical time almost obscured the existing indigenous society. In a multitude of ways, travellers' representation of Palestine paved the way for colonisation, ultimately portraying the land as possessing an untapped potential and, having in ancient times supposedly supported a very high population, now able to support a similar number of settlers. This question lay at the centre of travellers' representation of the conditions in Palestine in the late Ottoman era, addressed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER NINE

## 'Is This the "Glorious Land"?': The Representation of Late Ottoman Palestine

While Western travellers first and foremost approached Palestine as the ancient Holy Land, they were not blind to the contemporary rural landscape. This chapter reviews their representations of the Palestine of their present, focusing on how travellers viewed the region as fit for colonisation. The first section addresses travellers' reactions to the natural landscape; the second explores traveller-writers' views of Palestine's in/fertility and the land's use by indigenous Palestinians; the third discusses travellers' representations of "Eastern Palestine", east of the Jordan River; while the final section concentrates on travellers' views of a specific aspect of modernisation in the late Ottoman period, railways.

## I: 'Its Burned and Lifeless Aspect': Impressions of Palestinian Landscapes

As discussed in the previous chapter, traveller-writers often claimed to experience intense emotions approaching epiphany upon setting foot in Palestine, or even seeing its coastline. Yet their subsequent experiences frequently failed to match their initial experience or expectations. Travellers' representations of the landscape ranged widely, from positive accounts emphasising its beauty, to others attributing a disappointing or unattractive quality to the land, a product of the conjunction between their high expectations for the Holy Land and what they believed was its degradation in the present.

Many travellers appreciated the natural landscapes they encountered, contrasting what they thought of as pristine rural environments and squalid urban areas, as discussed in Chapter Ten. Claude Reignier Conder in his article "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", addressing believers in a Biblical curse on Palestine, praised the region's bucolic beauty:

> Those who have looked down on the glorious carpet of flowers which covers the Jordan valley in spring; who have heard the wild doves cooing in the oak-woods near Nazareth, and have seen the roebuck stealing through the glades of Carmel; who have ridden by the mountain brooks of Gilead, among the forests of pine and oak; who have seen the corn on the red Sharon and Galilean plains; who have crushed the thyme on Samaritan hills, and sat in the shady gardens where the fig, the olive, the mulberry, the apricot, and many other fruits are grown, – well know that the "good land" is a good land still.

With the well-worn allegation that the failure to effectively exploit this landscape lay with the Ottomans, he concluded that 'the curse that hangs over Palestine is the curse of unjust and unwise government'.[1]

In the remote countryside, imagined by Westerners as largely empty, travellers could extol their mental images of Biblical Palestine. Unseeing of or ignoring the indigenous people, travellers could also harbour the illusion of being engaged in the exploration of a *terra incognita*. Alexander Kinglake in *Eothen* wrote that he was

[1] Claude Reignier Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 149, No. 908 (June 1891), 856-870, pp. 867-868

> left all alone to be taught and swayed by the beautiful circumstances of Palestine travelling – by the clime, and the land, and the name of the land, with all its mighty import; by the glittering freshness of the sward, and the abounding masses of flowers that furnished my sumptuous pathway; by the bracing and fragrant air that seemed to poise me in my saddle, and to lift me along as a planet appointed to glide through space.[2]

This view reflected the Romantic notion of the effect of nature on a traveller's soul.[3] John Macgregor in *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* drew on an imperial spirit of exploration when he wrote that he had entered 'territory absolutely unknown and yet world-wide in its interest, where new discoveries are possible and likely, but only to the traveller journeying alone in a canoe'.[4] Palestine was represented as a promising virgin territory waiting to be revealed to the traveller. As the subtitle of Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine* put it, Palestine was a place for 'discovery and adventure'.

One of the most celebrated of Palestine's natural features was springtime flowers. Helen B. Harris in *Pictures of the East* gushed that near Jericho she had encountered 'such a flora as is very rarely seen. Indeed in America or Europe I have never met anything like it, not even on the glorious American prairies. It was like passing through some vast conservatory'.[5] H. Rider Haggard went as far to claim in *A Winter Pilgrimage* that 'the only sweet and cheerful things in the Holy Land, where even the native children for the most part appear so grave, are the lovely flowers which for a time smile upon its face, soon to be burnt up and vanish'. He used them as a Christian metaphor, since 'amid those sterile hills and rotting ruins these lilies of the field suggest to the mind the presence of a spirit of promise eternally renewed'.[6] The wildflowers of Palestine, beautiful in their own right, were especially appreciated since they hinted at the land's latent fertility and possibility for the Jews' "return" and agricultural colonisation.

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[2] Alexander W. Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), p. 152
[3] See James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to 'Culture' 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 6
[4] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), p. 186
[5] Helen B. Harris, *Pictures of the East* (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd, 1897), p. 64
[6] H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 299

This was lost on travellers outside the spring season, influencing their view of the land as barren. As the American missionary Henry Jessup (1832-1910) stated in *Picturesque Palestine*, 'visitors to the Holy Land in August or October go away with a melancholy feeling of depression at its burned and lifeless aspect, while those who come in March or April are charmed with its fresh and floral beauty'.[7] Arthur Copping noted in his *A Journalist in the Holy Land* that travellers in the most well-trodden regions, from Jaffa to Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, would 'report Palestine as arid, and its landscapes as lacking in sylvan charm', missing the chance to '[stand] waist-deep in flowers, and [gaze] on the Sea of Galilee. Not for them are the emerald valleys or the plains on fire with scarlet anemones'.[8] Yet Frederick Treves wrote cynically that

> to those who visit Palestine at other times than the spring these flowers become somewhat of a burden. The out-of-season tourist hears probably more of them than the spring tourist sees of them. They recur like a universal chorus when applied to a dozen different songs. If any comment be made upon the uncouthness of a spot there is ever the answer: 'But you should see it when the flowers are out.' If the poverty of the land be criticised there is the ready reply: 'But you should see it when the flowers are out'.[9]

Some travellers wrote little positive about the landscape. A "disappointing Palestine" became a literary trope, influencing subsequent travellers setting foot on Palestinian soil to expect to be underwhelmed. Rider Haggard noted that '"Were you not disappointed with the Holy Land?" is a question which the returning traveller is often called upon to answer'. He answered negatively, yet explained this was for Palestine's 'perpetual interest', i.e. its status as the Judeo-Christian Holy Land, rather than its existing characteristics.[10] Norman Macleod explained his similar sentiment in *Eastward*. While claiming that 'not for one moment' did he experience disappointment in Palestine, it was as 'the greatest poem I ever read, full of tragic grandeur and sweetest hymns' that he found satisfaction in Palestine, not as a living landscape; indeed he 'did not look for beauty, and therefore was not surprised at its absence'.[11]

[7] Henry H. Jessup, "Palmyra" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 2, 191-205, p. 191
[8] Arthur E. Copping*, A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), pp. 66-67
[9] Frederick Treves, *The Land that is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1912), p. 22
[10] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 343
[11] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 108

Complementing the focus on traces of the past, glossing over the existing landscape furthered the foregrounding of ancient times over the existing Palestine.

Others were more forthright in expressing their disappointment. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley wrote in *Sinai and Palestine* that 'those who describe Palestine as beautiful must have either a very inaccurate notion of what constitutes beauty of scenery, or must have viewed the country through a highly coloured medium'.[12] In *The Cradle of Christianity*, David Morison Ross similarly warned that

> The traveller will be disappointed if he expects to feast his eye on exceptionally beautiful scenery. There is magnificent scenery to the north of Palestine in the Lebanons, and to the south in the desert of Sinai, while in Palestine itself there are one or two charming spots, and there are many striking views, but the scenery is, on the whole, tame.[13]

Even some of the most hallowed natural landmarks in sacred topography were disparaged by some. Of the Mount of Olives, Josias Leslie Porter recorded in *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* that he 'was disappointed in Olivet; not in its associations – no Christian could be disappointed in these – but in its appearance. One always expects to find something in a holy or historic place worthy of its history. Here there is nothing'. The Mount had 'no striking features', being 'rounded, regular, colourless'.[14] To James Kean in *Among the Holy Places*, the Jordan River was 'the most dreadful river you have ever seen or could conceive', whilst Treves claimed that 'a drearier riverside could hardly be conceived except in the neighbourhood of cement works'.[15]

Multiple traveller-writers claimed that a supposed lack of trees contributed to the landscape' unattractiveness. 'Palestine is very largely a treeless country', wrote Ross, 'which accounts for the coldness and bareness of its scenery'.[16] Travellers frequently identified the Palestinian *fellahin* as damaging the natural environment through improvident deforestation. Frequently overlooked were the large plantations of olive and fruit trees around Palestinian villages; when making their accusations of deforestation, travellers focused on the perceived lack of "natural" forests. For

[12] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), p. 137
[13] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), pp. 3-4
[14] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), p. 98
[15] James Kean, *Among the Holy Places: A Pilgrimage Through Palestine* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, n/d [1895-1906]), p. 157; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 148
[16] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 16-17

example, Elizabeth Rundle Charles in *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* bemoaned that 'the improvident peasantry think nothing, we were told, of destroying trees to make charcoal; and thus the country is steadily laid waste'. She claimed further that 'the old, gnarled roots were there, to tell their tale of noble trunks and canopies of leafy branches, once filling the valley with the music of leaves and birds, blending with the voice of a stream which still flowed below' in Biblical times.[17]

Some travellers noted the existence of extensive forests in Palestine. James Finn, one of the more astute observers of the landscape, wrote in his *Byeways in Palestine* that 'travellers in Palestine, describing only what they have themselves seen along high-roads from town to town, under the guidance of professional dragomans and muleteers, generally deny the existence of forest scenery in Palestine', but that there were 'two large forests in Western Palestine [west of the Jordan River], accessible to the tourists who have leisure and will for knowing the country' in the northern and southern Galilee. However, Finn also blamed charcoal-burners of setting

> the sides of whole hills in a blaze, purposely kindled and then left by these men to perform the work with least trouble to themselves: the [Ottoman] Government takes no heed in the matter, and no care is employed for propagation of new trees to succeed the blackened ruin thus produced.[18]

Similarly, Conder wrote in an article that 'Palestine is by no means bare of trees', listing forests near Haifa, Hebron and Nazareth, though he too complained that 'this luxuriant wild growth flourishes in spite of wholesale destruction by the fire-wood sellers, and unprotected by any forest laws'.[19] The claim of indigenous Palestinians' wanton destruction of the environment chimed with British views of environmental damage committed by non-Western peoples around the British Empire. This influenced the views of British officials during the Mandate period, leading them to adopt a policy David B. Schorr terms 'colonial conservation' of forests in Palestine, continued by the Zionist movement and State of Israel.[20]

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[17] Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), p. 127

[18] James Finn, *Byeways in Palestine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877 [1868]), pp. 278, 280

[19] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine. [Reprinted from the *Jewish Chronicle*, by Kind Permission of the Editor.]", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 11 (Spring 1879), 6-15, pp. 6-7

[20] David B. Schorr, "Forest Law in Mandate Palestine: Colonial Conservation in a Unique Context" in Frank Uekötter, Uwe Lübken (eds.), *Managing the Unknown: Essays on Environmental Ignorance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 71-90

Interestingly, James Finn mentioned in his *Byeways* that, whilst British Consul in Jerusalem, he planted Australian trees in a Palestinian village close to Jerusalem, which were later destroyed. The planting of Australian

Trees in Palestine were politicised in travellers' minds; forestation was imagined as a goal of Palestine's colonisation by a European power. Some travellers harboured the belief that planting trees would not only increase rainfall in Palestine, but cool the regional climate, and help unlock the fertility of the soil. In *The Land of Promise*, Charles Warren claimed to have seen clouds forming above Jerusalem as a result of monasteries' olive groves around the city. He went further, presenting a vision of a Jewish colonised Palestine in which 'the presence of water brought down on the surface from the hills, together with the vast groves of trees to be planted, causes a change. The latter rains of June will be found to fall, giving a second season – a never-ending succession of crops'. Through colonial forestation, the Biblical prophecy of a fertile country could be realised.[21]

Unsurprisingly given travellers' beliefs on Palestinians' impact on the landscape, many saved their ire most of all for the rural Palestinian villages, often described in completely abject terms. Kean wrote of Zir'in in the Marj ibn Amer/Jezreel Valley, that it was 'poorer than almost any you have ever seen: the place might take a prize for squalour. The village on the site of Samaria city [Sebastia] was bad enough: this is below the lowest depths you could have conceived'.[22] Similarly, Copping wrote that 'with its rude dwellings, its uncouth and jeering rabble, and its crooked byways of filth and loose stones, Shefa-Amr was appalling rather than pleasing. Indeed, to my European eyes, it was, in all externals, frankly barbarous'. The village of Sulam, identified with the Biblical Shunem, 'disappointed our eyes and offended our noses', and 'looked like a prehistoric slum'.[23]

Both Palestinians' presence and their apparent absence were criticised: multiple travellers claimed that the coastal plain regions of Palestine were largely uninhabited, a product of the insecurity of these areas to Bedouin attack. This was indeed a trend across Ottoman Arab and North African regions until the mid-nineteenth century, when increased government control and communications contributed to growing stability and population.[24] Yet even when travellers witnessed these regions'

trees, an invasive alien species, was a tactic of the British 'conservation' during the Mandate period. Finn, *Byeways*, p. 450; Schorr, "Forest Law in Mandate Palestine"

[21] Charles Warren, *The Land of Promise; or, Turkey's Guarantee* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1875), pp. 16-17, 17-18

[22] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 218

[23] Copping*, Journalist in the Holy Land*, pp. 99-100, 170

[24] Alan George, "'Making the Desert Bloom': A Myth Examined", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Winter 1979), 88-100, p. 91

cultivation, they denigrated them. 'Nothing tells more plainly of the insecurity which has for ages cursed the land', claimed Henry Baker Tristram in *The Land of Israel*,

> than the utter absence of isolated habitations, or of any dwellings in the plains. No matter how wide, how rich, how well cultivated a plain may be, like Acre or Esdraelon, its tame monotony is never relieved by a single village. These are all hidden in the nooks of the mountains; for no fellâhin or cultivators would venture to dwell where any night they might be harried by a party of Bedouin troopers, and to this risk they gladly prefer an hour or two's weary climb added to their daily toil: while no traveller would dream of encamping even for a night in the open plain.[25]

By contrast, travellers opposed a vision of a Palestine densely inhabited and intensively cultivated, as they believed the region had been in ancient times.

One final noteworthy aspect of travellers' portrayals of Palestinian landscapes, subtly advancing British claims on Palestine, was the likening of parts of Palestine to regions in Britain. 'Less stern than Wast Water, less fair than gentle Windermere, she had still the winning ways of an English lake', Kinglake wrote of the Sea of Galilee; Stanley claimed 'those wild uplands of Carmel and Ziph are hardly distinguishable (except by their ruined cities and red anemones) from the Lowlands of Scotland or of Wales; these cultivated valleys of Hebron (except by their olives) from the general features of a rich valley in Yorkshire or Derbyshire'.[26] Given British Protestants' rhetoric of some level of identity between Britain and Palestine, comparisons with British scenery related Palestine further to Britain, and brought it further into the scope of plans for colonisation.[27] British travellers who had never previously been to Palestine reported feelings of familiarity with landscapes because of the supposed kinship with British sceneries: as Elizabeth Charles wrote, 'we feel as if we knew Bethany and the heights around it quite well. Beautiful, breezy hills they are, with slabs of rock tufted with herbage, reminding us of English downs'.[28] As with other forms of Orientalist "knowledge", this feeling preceded desire for possession.

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[25] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), pp. 441-442
[26] Kinglake, *Eothen*, p. 168; Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 102
[27] See Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 7-8
[28] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 111

## II: '*The Land That Was Desolate*'? Perceptions of Fertility and Infertility in Palestine

One of the most important aspects of the travelogues' representation of Palestine, intimately connected with proto-Zionist ideology and the question of colonisation, was the debate surrounding the land's fertility or infertility and the farming practices of the indigenous people. Travellers' obsession with the condition of the land, its occupancy and its utilisation, and the agonising over these questions in pages and pages of their accounts, were a reflection of the obsession of settler-colonial movements, with Zionism no exception, with territoriality. Land supports agriculture which, as Patrick Wolfe notes, 'enables a [settler] population to be expanded by continuing immigration at the expense of native lands and livelihoods' and ensures the long-term viability of the settler colony.[29]

If Palestine was presently a barren land with its agricultural resources squandered by its residents, yet with the potential to be made fertile as it was believed to have been in ancient times, colonisation could be morally and economically justified. The argument might be made, as John Locke had done for the English colonies in America in the late seventeenth century, that the land truly belonged to those who could farm it the best, i.e. with European farming methods.[30] This claim was later weaponised by the Zionist movement and Israel, which claimed that Jewish settlers, from the early colonists to Israeli agriculturists and farmers in the occupied territories, had been 'making the desert bloom'. As Alan George notes, this assertion has been used to belittle 'the extent of the catastrophe suffered by the Palestinians […] by repetition of the old assertion that the country had been an almost unpopulated desert before the Zionists' arrival'.[31] If Palestine was, in fact, at least partly well-farmed in the late Ottoman era, these arguments would be undermined. Both claims were made in travelogues, as explored below.

[29] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native*", Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006), 387-409, p. 395
[30] Barbara Arneil, "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (October 1994), 591-609. I would like to thank my friend and former student at the University of Exeter, Shayna Lewis, for suggesting this point to me.
[31] George, "'Making the Desert Bloom'", p. 89

## II.I: 'Partially and Poorly Cultivated': Representing Infertility

The view of Palestine as, in the title of Frederick Treves's travelogue, *The Land That Was Desolate* (a quotation from the Book of Ezekiel) was a dominant attitude in the Western imagination, subsequently held by British Mandate officials, Zionist ideologues, and many Israelis, including academics, up to the present.[32] Many traveller-writers subscribed to the view. Treves was far from alone in describing the landscape in comparison with the imagined ancient Palestine, with numerous Biblical quotations:

> Looking across this featureless country, so poverty stricken, so miserly, and so threadbare, one cannot but ask: Is this the 'glorious land,' the land 'that floweth with milk and honey,' 'the good land, the land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills'?[33]

The Bible was the main point of reference for travellers, believing that Palestine was under a curse because of the Israelites' historical misdeeds, culminating in the Jews' continuing rejection of Christ. This belief helped them to interpret the landscape they saw, but also led them to judge the land harshly, and concentrate on less fertile and inhabited areas which could easily fit into this narrative, particularly the regions around Jerusalem and Jericho – areas which were easy to reach from the central "base" of Jerusalem and were visited by the vast majority of travellers. In his *Notes of a Journey* William Thackeray described the former landscape as 'dark, lonely, and sad' and 'the most solemn and forlorn I have ever seen', whereas to Tristram it was 'neither grand, desolate, nor wild, but utter barrenness'.[34] Tristram called the Jericho region a 'barren desert', a once 'well-watered plain' reduced to 'devastation' by 'neglect', whilst Treves painted a picture of 'a mean country, a waste of innumerable hills […]. They are hills that are dead'.[35] Barren, desolate, neglected – these words were used to depict these regions, which could stand in for all Palestine.

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[32] See for example Mark LeVine, "The Discourses of Development in Mandate Palestine", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 1/2 (Winter and Spring 1995), 95-124; Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Modernization as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (May 1997), 25-48; Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979), p. 11; Ruth Kark and Noam Levin, "The Environment in Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period, 1798-1918" in Daniel E. Orenstein, Alon Tal and Char Miller (eds.), *Between Ruin and Restoration: An Environmental History of Israel* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 1-28

[33] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 128

[34] William Makepeace Thackeray [Mr. M.A. Titmarsh], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), p. 199; Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 367

[35] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 224; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 133

Numerous travellers referred explicitly to the notion of a curse or Biblical prophecies when describing the countryside. Ridley Haim Herschell in *A Visit to My Father-Land*, referencing the Book of Isiah, claimed 'the marks of the curse are indeed upon the land. Sometimes a green spot will be seen at a distance, giving the idea of fertility; but when approached, it is found to bear only the tokens of the original denunciation – thorns and briers'. 'It was melancholy to see thousands of acres lying waste, and the country lonely and depopulated', Herschell claimed of the Palestinian countryside.[36] Quoting the Book of Judges, Tristram insisted that 'many an expression in Scriptural phraseology was illustrated in our ramble. "The inhabitants of the villages have ceased in Israel." The plains, exuberantly rich and fertile, were desolate, choked with thistles and centaureas'.[37] Samuel Manning cited the Book of Jeremiah in *"Those Holy Fields"* when he claimed that 'day by day we were to learn afresh the lesson now forced upon us, that the denunciations of ancient prophecy have been fulfilled to the very letter, — "the land is left void and desolate and without inhabitants"'.[38] Conder quoted from a psalm to describe Palestine as 'a good country running to waste for want of cultivation: truly may it be said, "a fruitful land maketh He barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein"'.[39] Travellers took Biblical verses which may have referred to the Israelites' captivity in Babylon, or the attacks of the Persians, and applied them to Palestine in the late Ottoman period. Referencing the Bible gave their works an authority with which nothing could compete, and thus built a powerful discourse of Palestine's abandonment, current barrenness and latent promise.

Travellers also attributed earthly causes to what they saw as the land's poverty. One was supposedly ineffective indigenous Palestinian agricultural practices, which several travellers singled out for harsh criticism. The Palestinian plough (fig. 9.1) was particularly denigrated. In *Eastern Pilgrims*, Agnes Smith exclaimed 'what miserable ploughing we saw! The rough mountain side was slightly scratched by a tiny yoke of oxen, and then sown'; Ada Goodrich-Freer contemptuously called the Palestinian plough an 'inconceivably primitive instrument with which the fellah scratches the

[36] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to My Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843]), pp. 112, 69. C.f. Isiah 5:6 'And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it'.
[37] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 55
[38] Samuel Manning, "*Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 16
[39] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880), p. 370

surface of the fertile soil' in her *In a Syrian Saddle*.[40] Kean quipped of the countryside around Nazareth that 'the farming suggests the field of the sluggard'.[41]

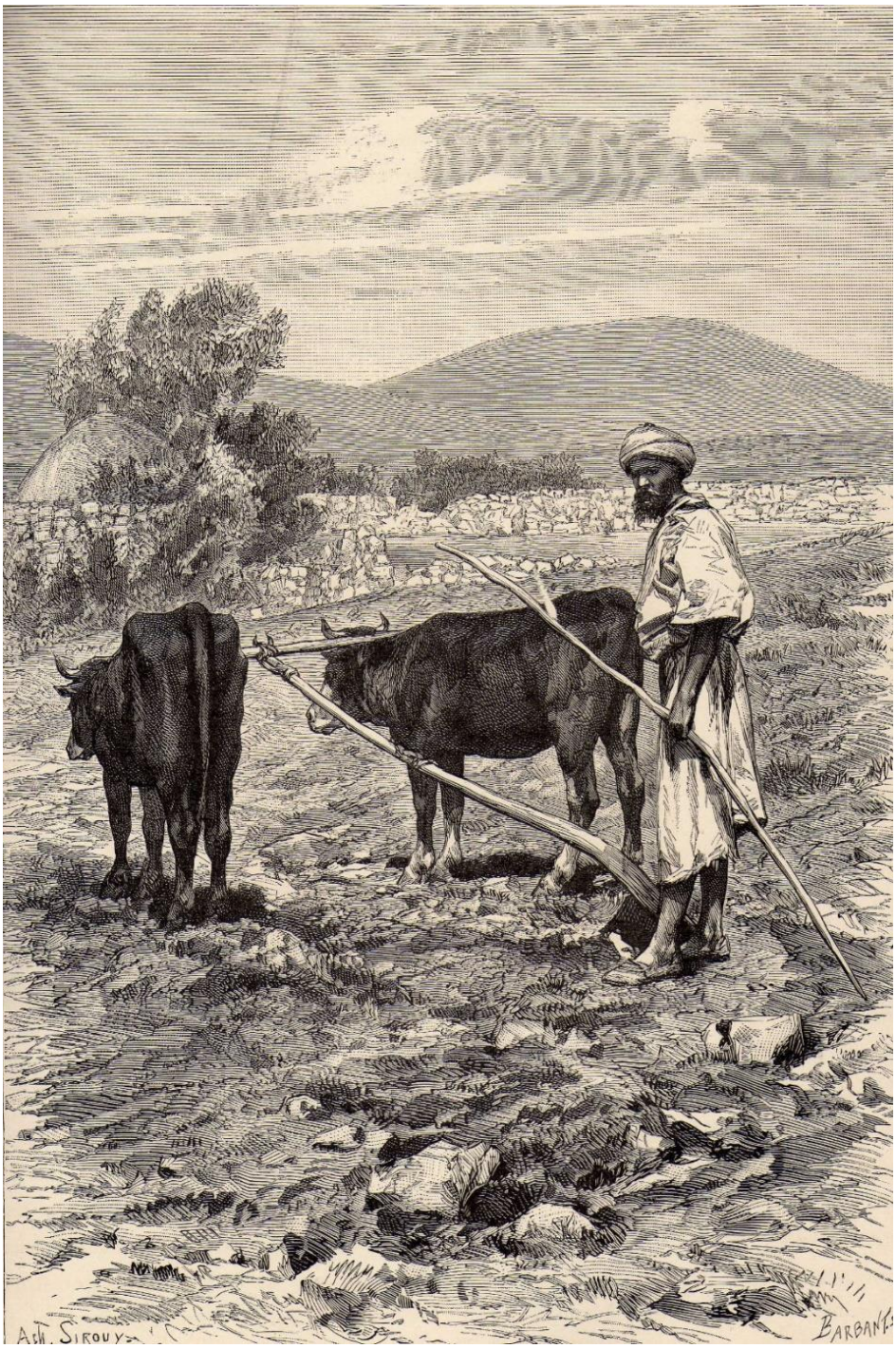

**Figure 9.1:**
**"Plough, Yoke of Oxen, and Goad, Galilee",**
***"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**facing page 75**

[40] Agnes Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims: The Travels of Three Ladies* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870), p. 221; Ada Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co., 1905), p. 119
[41] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 236

Palestine's land was framed as potentially fertile, but farmed ineffectively by the *fellahin*. A sense of almost criminal wastefulness was conveyed by Macleod, who claimed of the district between Safad and Tiberias, 'the richness of the plain itself cannot be surpassed, though it is only partially and poorly cultivated by a few oppressed and miserable-looking armed peasants'.[42] Even more damningly, Palestinian agriculturists were accused of actually damaging the land, not merely squandering it. Laurence Oliphant in *Haifa* complained of the cactus hedges he observed around Nablus, which he believed 'must impoverish the land'.[43] Some travellers blamed the *fellahin* for not maintaining the cultivation systems, such as irrigation channels and hillside terraces, believed by travellers to have been instituted by Palestine's ancient inhabitants. Writing in *Picturesque Palestine*, Selah Merrill lamented that 'even the very soil of Palestine has degenerated with the decay of former enterprise and prosperity'.[44] According to Conder, 'the ancient terraces so carefully built up or hewn in the hillsides now produce rich crops – but crops of weeds and thistles'.[45] Along the approach from Jaffa to Jerusalem, Richard Temple wrote in his *Palestine Illustrated*, 'was that terraced cultivation which once supplied the agricultural wealth of Palestine', the 'vineyards, the fig-orchards, the olive-groves'; yet according to Temple, 'during the distresses of many centuries, the stone walls of the terraces fell out of repair, the masonry dropped away piecemeal, the fertile soil, which had been thus sustained, was loosened, the descending rains washed away the earth with the dilapidated stones, and so the garden culture disappeared', until only 'traces of the skill and industry that once abounded here' remained.[46] Animal husbandry practices were also critiqued. William Hepworth Dixon in his *The Holy Land* claimed that the livestock of nomadic herders 'come like locusts, and so depart. Orchard, garden, meadow, pasture, vineyard, every green patch of ground is the same to these hungry herds'. According to Dixon, the result was that 'the soil falls out of cultivation; thorns sprout among the orange trees and apple trees; dôm, cactus, and prickly pear, take the places of dates and figs. The luxurious plain becomes a desert'.[47]

[42] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 262
[43] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), p. 342
[44] Selah Merrill, "Galilee" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 2, 49-96, p. 50
[45] Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine.", p. 7
[46] Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated.* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1888) p. 21-22
[47] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869), pp. 107-108

This representation of a 'luxurious' fertility, turned into a 'desert' through a range of human failings, provided a major service to the nascent Zionist movement, and received its acknowledgement from one of the movement's prominent leaders. If Zionist settler colonisation was to receive financial and political support, particularly from European governments, it was necessary to demonstrate that the colonies would be able to support themselves on Palestine's land. Nahum Sokolow specifically praised Conder and Warren for answering the question of 'whether the Jews would be capable of hard pioneer work in the sphere of agriculture', by demonstrating that 'Palestine is capable of supporting a nation such as the Jews'. 'These testimonies of English authorities concerning Palestine', Sokolow asserted, encouraged the formation and activity of Jewish Zionist groups such as *Hibbat Tsion*.[48]

Other human causes were also attributed by traveller-writers to the 'desolation'. Foremost was the Ottoman government, which many travellers represented as corrupt, inept, oppressive, rapacious, and ultimately the major obstacle to the utilisation land's full potential; some even interpreted Biblical prophecies as being fulfilled by Ottomans rule. Noting the fertility of the Palestinian plains which were only 'very partially cultivated', Eliot Warburton reflected in *The Crescent and the Cross* that 'it is upon the inhabitants and not upon the soil that the curse still lies', and that 'the more I see of Turkish rule, the more admirably does that rule appear adapted to accomplish a denouncing prophecy'.[49] Several travellers, including Mary Eliza Rogers in *Domestic Life in Palestine*, cited an apparently common Palestinian proverb, that '"the Jews built; the Greeks planted; and the Turks destroy"'.[50] Treves thought that after being 'for centuries ravaged by war and torn by internal dissensions' and 'plundered and laid waste', and having 'its inhabitants […] blotted out', the 'final calamity' for Palestine was that 'the country, sick unto death, has fallen into the baneful care of Turkey'.[51]

Travellers frequently recounted how the Ottoman system, with its local governors collecting taxes, impoverished the Palestinian *fellahin* and prevented them from farming effectively. Finn, for instance, reported that, near Gaza,

[48] Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), Volume 1, pp. 230-231
[49] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), p. 225
[50] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p. 20
[51] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 129

> An intelligent old man named 'Ali came up to me from the reaping and conversed much on the sad condition of agricultural affairs, complaining of the cruel oppression suffered by the peasantry from their petty local tyrants, and entreated me if I had any means of letting the Sultan of Constantinople know of it, that I would do so.[52]

Rogers wrote similarly that 'in many parts of the country a man will not run the risk of improving his estate […] for fear of exciting the rapacity of the governor of his district'; Warren in *Picturesque Palestine* alleged that Palestine's 'soil is most fertile, and its people are able and willing to till the land, were they not ground down and hindered by the rapacious officials who are sent periodically to take from them their gains'; Oliphant stated that 'the contrast between the misery and poverty of the fellahin and the extent and fertility of land owned by each village' was 'the inevitable result of the various fiscal devices to which the government has been compelled to resort' to pay its debts; and Ross claimed that 'the poor peasants are squeezed like sponges for the enrichment of the officials'.[53] Elizabeth Charles provided a literal example of Ottoman attack on farming, claiming to have seen near Nablus two Ottoman soldiers or 'bandit-like Bashi-Bazouks' who 'gallop[ed] their swift Arab horses through the corn fields, wheeling round and round among the ripe grain, and ruthlessly trampling it down'.[54]

A rare voice in defence of Ottoman control came from Dixon, who wrote that almost every Turkish official he came across had been 'a man of gentle manners, of fair information, of unfailing courtesy'; 'do the best men in our service beat them much?' he pondered.[55] Conder expressed a view closer to most when he asserted that 'it is the misfortune of Turkey, that the majority of the governing class are men ignorant and fanatical, sensual and inert, notoriously corrupt and tyrannical, who have succeeded only in ruining and impoverishing the countries they were sent to govern'. He insisted 'there must be a radical reform in government, before anything can be done to restore Palestine to its former condition'.[56] Conder emphasised that 'the only radical change required is the total abolition of the present official staff, from the pacha down to the lowest mudir or kaymakam'.[57]

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[52] Finn, *Byeways*, p. 176
[53] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, p. 161; Charles Warren, "Lydda and Ramleh" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 3, 145-148, p. 147; Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 178; Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 253
[54] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 169
[55] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 107
[56] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 129-130, 372
[57] Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine.", p. 14

Many travellers advocated the total cessation of Ottoman sovereignty in Palestine, and its colonisation whether by Britain, the "return" of the Jews, or a combination of the two; these calls are addressed in Chapter Eleven. Here, though, may be mentioned Warren's complaint that 'Palestine, now under the dominion of Turkey, is governed by laws which are not its own, by a people of a different race and type, by officials who do not even take the trouble to speak its language'. Warren defended the concept of empire, 'not […] wish[ing] to infer that aliens are incapable of governing a foreign country', but asserted that the Turk 'has far less power of sympathizing with the Arab than has the European'. With reference to the motif of the oppressive Ottoman governor, Warren claimed that 'all know how he misgoverns; all recognise that, to eke out the miserable stipend he receives from the Porte [the Ottoman court in Istanbul], he finds it necessary to squeeze the people to the utmost' for personal gain.[58]

Travellers' views and even language on the Ottomans were closely replicated by British politicians in wartime. David Lloyd George, in a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet of March 1917, expressed the third requirement for peace (i.e. a victory of the Entente Powers), after the defeat of Germany and 'the democratisation of Europe', as 'the disruption of the Turkish Empire'. Lloyd George drew on many of the prominent clichés of Palestine travel writing, claiming that the Ottomans were 'misruling […] the most fertile and the most favoured lands in the world', which had 'at one time maintained countless millions of people', but which had been 'swept of all fertility by hundreds of years of Turkish misrule'. With not a little, though implicit, hint of proto-Zionist discourse, Lloyd George proclaimed that 'it will be a great achievement to restore these famous territories to the splendour they enjoyed in the past, and to enable them once more to make their contribution to the happiness and prosperity of the world'.[59]

As discussed in Chapter Seven, travellers also blamed nomadic Bedouin tribes for Palestine's under-exploited agricultural potential. Tristram claimed that while the Jordan Valley had once been 'in the hands of the fellahin, and much of it cultivated for corn', it was now in 'the hands of the Bedouin, who eschew all agriculture, excepting in a few spots cultivated here and there by their slaves'.[60] This very passage was cited

[58] Warren, *Land of Promise*, pp. 3-4
[59] David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs of David Lloyd George* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1934), Volume 4, pp. 1773-1775
[60] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 490

as evidence of the 'centuries-old traditional incursion by Arab raiders' and 'spoiled, debauched Ottoman-ruled land' by Joan Peters in *From Time Immemorial*, a work which sought to justify the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948.[61] Indicative of the continuing influence of the narrative established by traveller-writers, all the reasons (bar the Biblical curse) discussed above identified as causes for Palestine's alleged 'desolation' – Bedouin incursions, Ottoman misrule, damaging farming practice by the *fellahin* and deforestation – were included in a 2013 chapter by Israeli academics Ruth Kark and Noam Levin, the authors citing nineteenth century travelogues as supporting evidence.[62]

## II.II: 'The Highest State of Cultivation': Representing Fertility

Despite the pervasive image of Palestine's abandonment and neglect by its inhabitants, there were also many depictions of Palestinian regions successfully cultivated by indigenous farmers, questioning the accuracy of the dominant image. Even travellers predisposed to present Palestine as barrenness itself, also authored passages indicating productive agriculture encountered around Palestine. Herschell recorded that he was 'much struck with the beautiful verdure of the trees in the orchards' on the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa, though he was careful to add that is was 'a sight so rare in "this land of drought" and barrenness' (quoting from the Books of Hosea and Jeremiah).[63] The country around Jaffa, the first experience of the landscape for many travellers, was extolled as particularly fertile, renowned for its citrus plantations and trees of many varieties. Macleod described 'endless groves of oranges and lemons, apricots, pomegranates, figs, and olives, with mulberry and acacia trees, the stately palm towering above them all', while Porter wrote of 'a vast sea of verdure, many-tinted and varied in outline, with the palm, the pomegranate, the spreading terebinth, the golden orange and lemon, and the stately cypress'.[64] Kean even claimed that 'all around seems a paradise' under 'the shade of handsome trees' outside Jaffa.[65]

[61] Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), pp. 166, 167
[62] Kark and Levin, "The Environment in Palestine"
[63] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 172
[64] Macleod, *Eastward*, pp. 80-81; Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. ii
[65] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 9

Other regions too attracted attention for the local agriculture. Of Bethlehem, Dixon noted that 'the vines, the fig trees, and the olive trees love the soil', and in his *Patrollers of Palestine* Haskett Smith recalled passing through a 'highly cultivated valley planted with olives and filled with growing crops of barley' on the route from Jerusalem.[66] As noted in Chapter Five, some travellers linked this farming with the Bethlehemites' Christian faith. Yet Hebron and Nablus, Muslim-majority towns frequently accused of "fanaticism", also impressed travellers with the wealth of their surrounding fields.[67] Stanley described 'ploughed fields and oxen' outside Hebron, land 'partitioned into gardens and fields, green fig-trees and cherry-trees, and the vineyards', and even 'valleys [which] now began, at least in our eyes, almost literally "to laugh and sing"' – quoting from a psalm to pay tribute to indigenous Palestinian agriculture.[68] Kean also mentioned the 'cultivated hillsides and well-watered dales' of the 'grand country' around the 'thriving neighbourhood' of Hebron, contrasting with 'the arid stony mountains about Jerusalem'.[69] As for Nablus, Mary Rogers reported that 'for about two hours we passed through a highly-cultivated district of hills and plains, dotted with villages, olive-groves, and orchards, and green fields where labourers were busy' between Nablus and Jerusalem.[70] Kean noted that, west of Nablus, was a region where 'you might almost fancy yourself in Europe', with a 'thriving appearance' and watermills grinding grain.[71]

Bethlehem, Hebron and Nablus were all in Palestine's hill regions, which travellers believed were more densely inhabited and cultivated because of their lower vulnerability to Bedouin attack, leaving the more fertile lowland regions of Palestine uncultivated. However, travellers reported effective agriculture in locations the length and breadth of Palestine, from the edge of the Naqab Desert to the Galilee. Tristram mentioned rich fields of wheat near Bir al-Saba'/Beersheba, which were 'lingering evidence of what the land once was, and may yet again become'.[72] Temple reported that Jericho was 'situated in the midst of cultivation; its lands are densely wooded and permeated by channels of irrigation […] The garden cultivation is not well ordered, but

[66] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 78; Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 223
[67] David Kushner, "Zealous Towns in Nineteenth-Century Palestine", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (July 1997), 597-612
[68] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 100
[69] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 77
[70] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, p. 279
[71] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 187
[72] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 372-373

it is very productive'.[73] Harris wrote of the short journey from Jerusalem to Jericho that in springtime, 'the valleys are full of fig, olive, and vineyards, and also of rich cornfields — the barley nearly ready to cut — the wheat luxuriant in beautiful green'.[74]

Further north, around Jenin, John Wilson in his *The Lands of the Bible* described 'very fine plots of dark black soil, on which considerable quantities of cotton are raised'. Of the nearby Jezreel/Marj bin 'Amer region, Wilson 'observed far more culture in the great valley, in general, than the accounts of travellers had led us to expect'.[75] Stanley wrote similarly that 'the aspect of the plain itself in spring-time is of a vast waving cornfield; olive-trees here and there springing from it'.[76] Oliphant addressed his audience directly on the subject:

> Readers will be surprised to learn that almost every acre of the plain of Esdraelon [another name for the area] is at this moment in the highest state of cultivation […] It looks to-day like a huge green lake of waving wheat, with its village-crowned mounds rising from it like islands; and it presents one of the most striking pictures of luxuriant fertility which it is possible to conceive.[77]

Ross attributed this to increased security; whereas once 'Esdraelon was mostly left uncultivated, because the Turkish Government failed to secure the crops of the peasants against the thieving bedawin', by the 1890s 'there are few acres of uncultivated ground in the whole plain. And what is true of Esdraelon is true of the other extensive tracts of agricultural land'.[78]

Travellers also reported extensive farming in the Galilee. Of eastern Galilee, Stanley described 'rich fields of millet, corn, and sweet peas' around the Huleh Valley, and land 'as rich with gardens and with corn-fields as the most favoured spots in Egypt' near the Sea of Galilee.[79] In western Galilee, Mary Rogers claimed, with implicit reference to European colonisation, that 'if the plain of Akka were cultivated with skill and energy it would yield abundantly', but still admitted that 'under the present system the soil produces in winter, wheat, barley, beans, lentils, peas, and tobacco; and in the

[73] Temple, *Palestine Illustrated*, p. 108
[74] Harris, *Pictures of the East*, p. 63
[75] John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (London: William White and Co., 1847), Volume 2, p. 85
[76] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 336
[77] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 59-60
[78] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 252
[79] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 393-394, 122

summer-time cotton, sesame, millet, and many kinds of cucumbers'.[80] 'Every hill is a vineyard; every bottom a corn-field', wrote Dixon, and Goodrich-Freer described her route through the Galilee as 'just such as one finds in the neighbourhood of an English agricultural village — a well-trodden path between cultivated lands'.[81]

One of the most committed advocates of the Jewish "return" to Palestine, was also one of the most appreciative of the highly cultivated condition of many parts of the country by the indigenous population. This was Finn, who in his *Byeways in Palestine* recorded the agricultural production of villages which few other travellers visited. Finn could make pronouncements saturated in proto-Zionist discourse, such as in his introduction to *Byeways*:

> Sad cogitations would arise while traversing, hour after hour, the neglected soil, or passing by desolated villages which bear names of immense antiquity, and which stand as memorials of miraculous events which took place for our instruction and for that of all succeeding ages; and then, even while looking forward to a better time to come, the heart would sigh as the expression was uttered, "How long?"

However, Finn also presented a picture of highly successful farming across Palestine. Of Tubas, northeast of Nablus, Finn wrote that 'the natural soil here is so fertile that its wheat and its oil […] fetch the highest prices in towns; and the grain is particularly sought after as seed for other districts'. West of Jenin, Finn wrote of 'a fine village named *Yaabad* in a lovely plain richly cultivated; there were after the earlier crops young plantations of cotton rising, the fields cleared of stones and fenced in by the most regular and orderly of stone dykes'. He praised the village of Yibneh, south of Jaffa on Palestine's coastal plain (an area often depicted as abandoned), writing 'the population seemed very industrious: they have cheerful bayârahs, or enclosed orchards, and the open fields were exceedingly well cultivated', and mentioning the 'most pleasing' sight of 'the return of flocks and herds from pasture, and the barley-harvest coming home upon asses and camels with bells on their necks all enlivened by the singing or chattering of women and children' in the evening. Of Asdud, a short distance away, Finn exclaimed 'I do not know where in all the Holy Land I have seen such excellent agriculture of grain, olive-trees, and orchards of fruit, as here at Ashdod. The fields would do credit to English farming'. Finally and contradictorily, near

[80] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 141-142
[81] Dixon, *Holy Land*, p. 117; Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 224

Dhahiriyeh south of Hebron, although Finn complained of land 'lying untilled for want of population, and serving only as so much space for wild tribes to roam over', he also reported that 'at the village all the population was cheerfully employed in threshing or winnowing the harvest, and their flocks crouched in the shade of the trees'.[82]

Some travellers explicitly expressed appreciation – albeit in modest terms – of Palestinian farming, in distinction to other travellers' denigration of it. Positive judgements mainly hinged on the claim of the high fertility of Palestinian soil, which apparently lavishly rewarded even basic agricultural methods. Warren claimed that 'even now, when the land is sparsely populated, badly tilled, miserably mismanaged, the people grow rich' from the quantity and quality of their produce, although most of their wealth was taken by the Ottomans and 'spent for them at Stamboul'.[83] Conder praised the 'beautiful crops of barley and wheat, raised by merely scratching the ground with the light native plough', and olive oil 'said to be the finest in the world'.[84] Ross noted that while 'the manuring of the land is unknown', he nevertheless 'saw several patches of wheat which would have delighted the eye of a British farmer' (fig. 9.2).[85]

A detailed analysis was provided in an appendix, 'Farming in Palestine', of James Neil's *Palestine Re-Peopled*. Neil emphasised 'that farming in the Holy Land is a highly profitable occupation, notwithstanding the curse which yet rests on the country', and claimed his analysis was 'confirmed from the unexceptionable witness of both European and Arab farmers, with whom I was in daily intercourse'. He praised the plough used by the *fellahin*, which others had thought so primitive, writing that 'it fully suffices for the work'. Neil extolled 'the great fertility of ordinary arable lands', 'the still greater fertility of irrigated lands' and 'the immense productiveness of fruit trees' in Palestine. Parts of his report were tailored to would-be colonisers of Palestine. He pointed out that 'labour is very cheap' – presumably for the European investor – and that 'animals, like their masters, require only the lightest and simplest food in a hot country'.[86]

[82] Finn, *Byeways*, pp. vi-vii, 92, 222 160, 162, 192-193
[83] Warren, *Land of Promise*, pp. 12-13
[84] Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine.", p. 7
[85] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 30
[86] James Neil, *Palestine Re-Peopled; Or, Scattered Israel's Gathering. A Sign of the Times.* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877), pp. 152-155

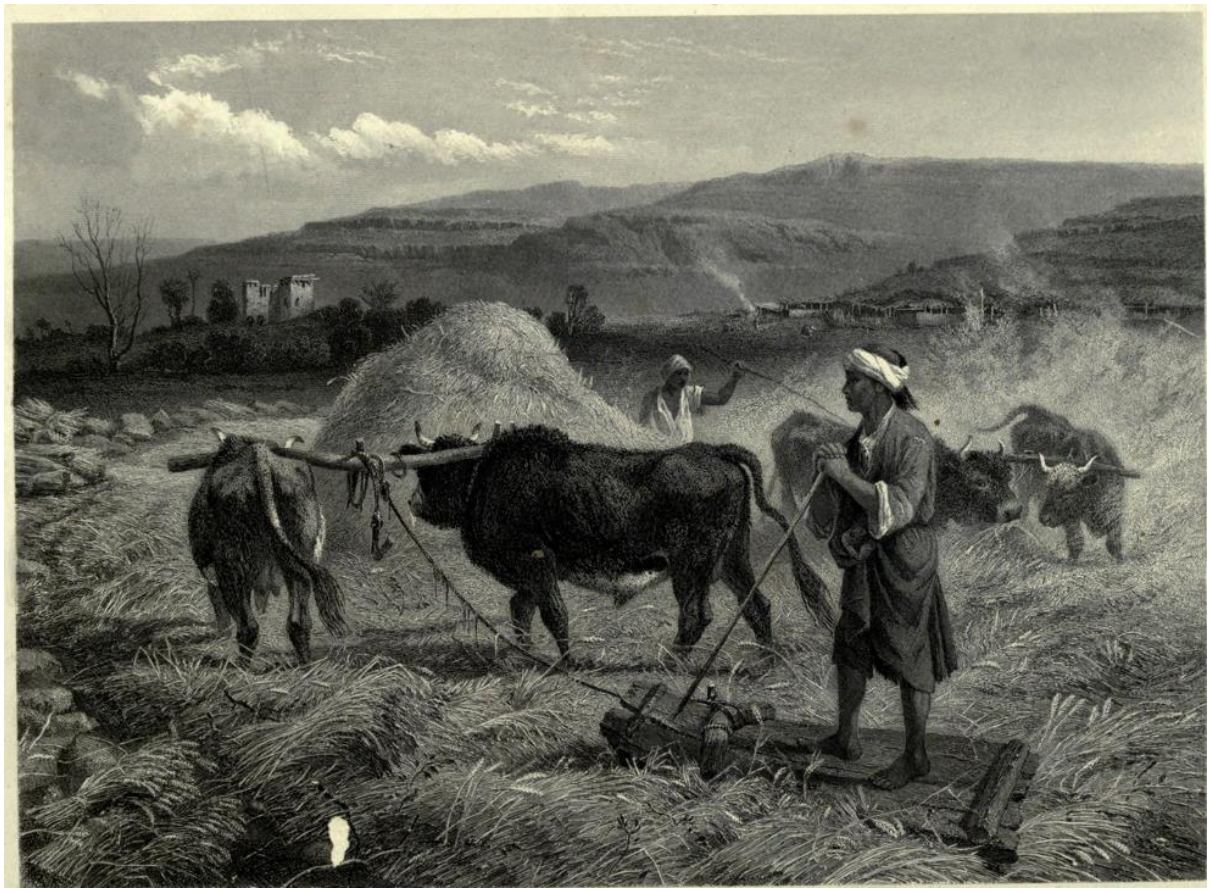

**Figure 9.2:**
**"Threshing Corn"**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, facing page 200**

While traveller-writers such as Finn continued to voice judgements on Palestine within the mainstream discourse of desolation, the accounts simultaneously represented high-quality cultivation of land occurring in almost every locale. This led some to re-evaluate their expectations of Palestine, away from a simplified picture of an abandoned and cursed Holy Land. Of countryside near al-Zakariyeh, west of Jerusalem, Finn remarked

> Emerging on the great plain, we had to wade monotonously through an ocean of wheat. How I longed to have with me some of the blasphemers of the Holy Land, who tell us that it is now a blighted and cursed land, and who quote Scripture amiss to show that this is a fulfilment of prophecy.[87]

[87] Finn, *Byeways*, p. 154

Oliphant expressed the same sentiment. With an attack on Thomas Cook's tours, for which he repeatedly expressed disdain, he wrote

> Traversing this fertile country one is more and more impressed with the incorrectness of the judgment of the ordinary tourist, who, confining himself to the route prescribed by Cook, is taken through the barren hills of Judea, and to one or two holy places in Galilee, and then goes home and talks about the waste and desolation of Palestine.[88]

These more realistic appraisals of land usage in Palestine, less blinkered by Evangelical doctrine, led some travellers to realise the difficulties with the "return" of the Jews and their redemption of the Holy Land through farming. Oliphant's recognition that the fertile land west of the Jordan was already under cultivation persuaded him to select land elsewhere for a Jewish colony, as discussed in Chapter Eleven. Alternatively, Conder initially advocated the exploitation of the agricultural labour of the Palestinian *fellahin*, rather than the creation of agricultural colonies.[89] The subsequent transformation of Conder and Oliphant into supporters of Zionist settlement in Palestine, shows that awareness of Palestinians' effective utilisation of land was not enough to prevent those with knowledge of conditions in Palestine from supporting a settler-colonial movement in contest with the indigenous people for the same land.

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Given the gulf separating representations of Palestine as a desolate wilderness, and as a fertile, cultivated land, it is doubtful whether the travelogues can be used as a source for the Palestinian landscape and indigenous agriculture in late Ottoman Palestine. The travelogues are unreliable witnesses of Palestine's past. In light of travellers' hopes for Palestine's colonisation, there were incentives for traveller-writers to both under- and over-represent Palestine's fertility. If Palestine was represented as degraded, its agricultural potential untapped, and subject to the Biblical curse, then it could be portrayed as fit for the "return" of the Jews, beginning with agricultural settlements using European farming methods. Alternately, presenting Palestine as an already farmed and productive region also highlighted potential for colonisation,

[88] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 121
[89] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 386-387; Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine."

perhaps through exploitation of indigenous labour and farming techniques, instead of or alongside settler agriculture.

While these discourses pulled upon Western travellers' depictions of the Palestinian landscape in both directions, the testimonies (stripped of their proto-Zionist trappings) of travellers such as James Finn, who journeyed extensively surveying villages and observing the landscape throughout the year, provide compelling evidence of a flourishing agriculture in many locations in Palestine. This tallies with the research of No'am Seligman – included in the same collection as the chapter by Kark and Levin – which draws on late Ottoman and British Mandate statistics to demonstrate that the Palestinian *fellahin* provided adequately for themselves regarding their agricultural needs. Seligman notes that Westerners' often quite contradictory views of the land, depended on the 'different approaches, beliefs, preconceptions, prejudices, agenda and itinerary of the authors'; and despite these prejudices, indigenous farming practices 'tended to preserve the natural resources rather than destroy them', and often made better use of the land than the European technologies introduced by Zionist settlers and the State of Israel.[90]

[90] No'am G. Seligman, "The Environmental Legacy of the Fellaheen and the Bedouin in Palestine" in Orenstein, Tal and Miller (eds.), *Between Ruin and Restoration*, 29-52, pp. 32, 48

## III: 'As Devonshire Surpasses Cornwall': Representing "Eastern Palestine"

An important aspect of some travellers' representations of Palestine as a fertile land was the descriptions of regions east of the Jordan River. This area, which Britain delineated from the rest of Palestine as the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921, was commonly referred to by British travellers as Eastern Palestine.[91] Biblical names for districts in the region, such as Gilead and Moab, were also common parlance; the use of these terms cast east of the Jordan as an integral part of the Holy Land and within the area allotted for the "return" of the Jews.

With fewer obvious sites of interest than "Western Palestine", and the difficulty in crossing the Jordan River aside from a few crossings in remote locations, 'Eastern Palestine' was initially left off most travellers' itineraries; nevertheless, it held a fascination for many. 'Who that has ever travelled in Palestine', wrote Stanley,

> has not longed to cross the Jordan valley to those mysterious hills which close every eastward view with their long horizontal outline, their overshadowing height, their deep purple shade? It is this which probably constitutes the most novel feature of the Holy Land to any one who first sees it with his own eyes.[92]

Regions east of the Jordan were far from a *terra incognita* to the West. European travellers such as Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767-1811), Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (1784-1817) and James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855) had all traversed the region in the early nineteenth century, leaving written accounts. To later travellers however, as exemplified by Stanley's quote, east of the Jordan served as an exotic and mysterious counterpoint to the well-worn pathways in Palestine.

In travellers' minds, the region was also marked by lawlessness and unsubdued Bedouin tribes beyond Ottoman control, and travel there required adventurousness, bravery and dedication. In his *Giant Cities of Bashan*, a travelogue named after one of the area's Biblical appellations, Porter represented travellers' attitudes in writing that the area was

> among the most interesting of the provinces of Palestine. It is comparatively unknown, besides. Western Palestine is traversed every

[91] For an account of the British-enforced political separation between Palestine and Transjordan, see Walid Kazziha, "The Political Evolution of Transjordan", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (May 1979), 239-257
[92] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 319

> year; it forms a necessary part of the Grand Tour, and it has been described in scores of volumes. But the travellers who have hitherto succeeded in exploring Bashan scarcely amount to half-a-dozen; and the state of the country is so unsettled, and many of the people who inhabit it are so hostile to Europeans, and, in fact, to strangers in general, that there seems to be but little prospect of an increase of tourists in that region.[93]

An 1873 publication of the Palestine Exploration Fund revealed that even they waived the opportunity to survey the area, making 'an arrangement with our friends in America [the American Palestine Exploration Society] by which we have left them the east of Jordan, and reserved to ourselves the west'; the Fund gave the advice – almost a warning – that 'to those who propose to raise any private expedition we would say – *wait*'.[94] Perhaps wary of being left behind, however, and realising that their advice would be unheeded by some (Tristram published his *The Land of Moab: Travels and Discoveries on the East Side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan* in 1873), the Fund changed its position.[95] In 1881 the region was traversed by a team led by Conder, his *Heth and Moab* condensing this survey into a travelogue, complete with an attack on Ottoman rule after the local authorities cut the survey short as a result of souring British-Ottoman relations.[96] In 1882, he accompanied two British princes, including the future George V, on a five-day journey east of the Jordan during their visit to Palestine.[97] In 1885, *Cook's Tourist Handbook* included a section on 'Tours East of the Jordan (Moab)'.[98] Travel east of the Jordan had become a mainstream, if not "essential", part of Western visits to Palestine.

Travellers reported the dangers from Bedouin or villagers east of the Jordan. Tristram described his group's harassment by the people of Souf, a village near the ruins of Jerash, led by 'the deputy of the village, Sheikh Yusuf, one of the most

[93] Josias Leslie Porter, *The Giant Cities of Bashan, and Syria's Holy Places* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1882), p. 17
[94] Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, *Our Work in Palestine: Being an Account of the Different Expeditions Sent Out to the Holy Land* (London: Bentley & Son, 1873), pp. 327-328
[95] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Moab: Travels and Discoveries on the East Side of the Dead Sea and the Jordan* (London: John Murray, 1874)
[96] Claude Reignier Conder, *Heth and Moab. Explorations in Syria in 1881 and 1882* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1885)
[97] Claude Reignier Conder, *The Survey of Eastern Palestine. Memoirs of the Topography, Orography, Hydrography, Archæology, Etc.* (London: The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1889), Volume 1, p. 282
[98] Anonymous: *Cook's Tourist Handbook for Palestine and Syria* (London: Thomas Cook & Son, and Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. 1885), pp. 449-461

unmitigated scoundrels of my acquaintance'.[99] Kean recorded receiving great hospitality from Bedouins east of the Sea of Galilee, but noted that 'they looked upon robbery as their proper calling', and 'if three or four of them meet one or two of you, they simply call your attention to the disparity of numbers, and request you to hand over what you happen to carry'; Kean also warned of Circassian immigrants, such as those settled in Amman, who he claimed were 'unscrupulous bullies and thieves, […] a terror far and near'.[100] Goodrich-Freer reported being accompanied on her journey east of the Jordan by Ottoman soldiers as a result of the danger posed by 'wild tribes, who submit to no government but that of their own chief'.[101]

Writers framed Eastern Palestine as superior in many ways to Western Palestine. As Ross wrote, 'in many respects the district east of the Jordan is more interesting than Western Palestine. It has been less explored – an attraction for most travellers. It has finer wheat-fields, finer pastures, and finer forests. Its ruins of great Roman cities, like Gerash and Amman, are more extensive.'[102] To have travelled there was to have acquired a greater knowledge of – and therefore authority and power over – the whole Palestine region. 'No one can fairly judge of Israel's heritage', claimed Tristram, 'who has not seen the luxuriant exuberance of Gilead, as well as the hard rocks of Judea'.[103] In *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant wrote similarly that

> The traveller who only knows Palestine to the west of the Jordan, can form no idea of the luxuriance of the hillsides of Gilead, doubly enjoyable by the contrast which they present to the rocky barren slopes of Galilee and Judea, or even to the plains of the Hauran and Jaulan.[104]

As demonstrated, travellers especially praised the fertility of the land, by comparison to Palestine between the Jordan and the Mediterranean. Stanley wrote that 'Eastern Palestine' 'in beauty and fertility […] as far surpasses western Palestine as Devonshire surpasses Cornwall'.[105] This preference was linked to the comparative lack of human presence. Those bemoaning supposed lack of trees in Palestine, expressed their delight on encountering forests across the Jordan. James Finn celebrated the 'thick green woods, the oaks of Bashan, with merry birds carolling all around', exclaiming

[99] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 476
[100] Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, p. 169
[101] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 89
[102] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 11
[103] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 464
[104] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead,* p. 160
[105] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 324

'oh, how cheering was the scene, after that devastated land across the river, where there is so little of forest land left in proportion to this!'[106] 'Eastern Palestine' was represented as an unspoilt paradise, with a lack of human presence which, in the words of Tristram, left 'the present state of Bashan and Gilead […] just what Western Canaan was in the days of Abraham'.[107]

Traveller-writers noted that *fellahin* who were present east of the Jordan were effective farmers, aided (in travellers' minds) by the fertile soil. Tristram described the country around Salt as 'a lovely natural park, all the glades of which were covered with rich crops of wheat and barley'; Finn wrote of the same region's 'fruitful gardens, the produce of which finds a market in Nabloos and Jerusalem. The scenery reminded me of the Lebanon in its green aspect of industry and wealth'.[108] Yet rather than eliciting recognition of the potential of indigenous agriculture, this productive land inspired thoughts of colonisation and the exploitation of the area by European farming methods. Oliphant justified his plans for a large colony in the Balqa' region by claiming that 'local conditions were peculiarly favourable to the introduction of immigrants, through whose capital and industry these fertile regions might once more be rendered vastly productive'. By comparison, in Western Palestine, 'the few fertile spots which exist are already under cultivation by the resident population'. Oliphant recognised the indigenous agriculture of Palestine, and the barrier it presented to Jewish colonisation.[109] Conder similarly recommended to Zionist activists in a speech of 1892 to 'buy all the land you can get at moderate prices in Bashan and in Northern Gilead, and buy it soon, for the price will go up'.[110]

Whilst the question of the fertility of Western Palestine was a key part of Evangelical and proto-Zionist discourse, the importance of traveller-writers' representations of Eastern Palestine is harder to quantify. In the long-term, Britain was to close Transjordan to Zionist immigration. This policy distressed pro-Zionist British officials such as Herbert Samuel (1870-1963), who like earlier British travellers viewed land east of the Jordan as part of Palestine, within the area for Jewish settlement.[111] It also drew the ire of the Zionist movement, elements of which would continue to express the desire for sovereignty over, in the words of a poem by Ze'ev Jabotinsky,

[106] Finn, *Byeways*, pp. 66-67
[107] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 473
[108] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 557; Finn, *Byeways*, p. 41
[109] Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, p. 248
[110] Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 2, p. 275
[111] See Kazziha, "The Political Evolution of Transjordan"

'the left bank of the Jordan', for decades to come.[112] Ironically, while British travellers viewed Eastern Palestine as part of Palestine, the belief in the already-existing productive state of agriculture, and the independent and unruly population, may have contributed to the eventual separation of "Eastern" and "Western" Palestine.

[112] Nadav Shelef, "From 'Both Banks of the Jordan' to the 'Whole Land of Israel': Ideological Change in Revisionist Zionism*", Israel Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 2004), 125-148. Also see Nadav Shelef, *Evolving Nationalism: Homeland, Identity, and Religion in Israel, 1925–2005* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), pp. 25-49

## IV: 'The Invasion of the Iron Horse': Railways and Change in the Palestinian Landscape

Whilst viewing Palestine as stuck in the ancient past, travellers also witnessed aspects of change which had an impact on the landscape, and suggested hints of the future to highly fertile imaginations. One of the most significant changes was the coming of railways, which travellers represented with varying degrees of enthusiasm or ambivalence, providing insights into their conceptualisations of Palestine and modernity.

Rail transportation arrived in Palestine in two stages: the Jaffa to Jerusalem line, opened in 1892, and a branch of the Hijaz Railway connecting Haifa and stations in northern Palestine with Damascus, opened in 1905. They were witnessed, used and described by travellers; yet well before construction began, travellers predicted the arrival of rail. An early contribution was apparently made by Thackeray in an issue of the magazine *Punch*, subsequently cited by several travellers.[113] Thackeray's words, as referenced by Haskett Smith, hinged on the Orientalist fear that the railway would not only despoil Palestine's landscape, but also be tantamount to blasphemy in a land the charm of which resided in its backwardness:

> If this state of things goes on much longer even the Holy Land itself will not be safe from the invasion of the Iron Horse. The shrill whistle of the engine will resound over the Plain of Sharon, and the stentorian voice of the guard will be heard shouting: "Ease her, stop her! Change for Joppa!"[114]

The same sentiment was reported by Macleod as being felt by a 'a lady, whose mind was engrossed with the question of the return of the Jews to Palestine', who was 'dreadfully shocked' when a 'religious and highly respectable man' pondered aloud whether 'the time was not far distant when there might be a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and the cry be heard from an English voice of, "Bethlehem Station!"' The indignant reaction of 'the fair friend of Israel' was to accuse the man of profanity.[115]

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[113] The issue of *Punch* and the article by Thackeray could not be identified; however, compare the following words from Oliphant compared to those by Smith. 'When Thackeray foretold that the day would come when the scream of the locomotive would awake the echoes in the Holy Land, and the voice of the conductor be heard shouting, "Ease her, stop her! Any passengers for Joppa?" he probably did so very much in the spirit in which [historian Thomas Babington] Macaulay prophesied the New-Zealander sitting on the ruins of London Bridge, as an event in the dim future, and as a part of some distant impending social revolution; but the realization of the prediction is becoming imminent'. Oliphant, Haifa, p. 63

[114] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 49-50

[115] Macleod, *Eastward*, pp. 117-119

Joppa (Jaffa) indeed became the terminus for Palestine's first railway which served travellers arriving by sea from the West, taking them to Jerusalem far quicker than the previous horseback journey which often included an overnight stop near Ramleh. Thackeray's became a trope: so powerful was the conceptualisation of Palestine as a historical land, when something was encountered which contradicted this, travellers could feel deeply disturbed. Merrill, in an article on the opening of the line, wrote 'if ever an act seemed like sacrilege it is the introduction of a railroad into Palestine, with the sound of whistle and rushing train among the old and quiet hills of Judea'; Merrill only consoled himself with the thoughts that 'Providence is guiding the march of civilization' and 'the natives, both high and low, are gradually waking up to the idea that it [the railway] means promptness and rapidity'. Ominously for the indigenous people, he also claimed that the opening of the railway had turned 1892 into 'a kind of "Columbus year" for Palestine'.[116] Smith described the railway as 'rather a prosaic way of going up to Jerusalem', 'an act of vandalism', or even 'committing a profanity', since it ran 'so entirely counter to all one's natural and religious sentiments upon the subject'.[117]

Some travellers viewed the railway as a momentous event heralding profound change for the Holy Land, with the disruption brought by Western technology being a regrettable yet inevitable part of "progress". Ross described the 'great rejoicings at Jaffa over the cutting of the first sod of the railway to Jerusalem', and wrote that, as a result of the 'rapid progress' exemplified by the railway, 'the stationariness which we used to associate with Palestine is disappearing' and 'the Palestine described by Dean Stanley will scarcely be recognisable by the traveller of the year 1916'. Mentioning the surveying for another railway in northern Palestine, Ross reflected he was 'glad that I have mused by the shores of the Lake [the Sea of Galilee] before the advent of the engine whistle and the excursion train'.[118] Similarly, to Copping, travellers who wished '"If only Palestine were opened up with railways!"' would 'scarce be echoed by those who have seen the country as it is, still retaining the aspect of a hallowed antiquity, and who may well feel jealous lest steam traction should mitigate those primitive glories'.[119] Treves, who included a photograph (fig. 9.3) of the train in which he

[116] Selah Merrill, "The Jaffa and Jerusalem Railway", *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (March 1893), 289-301, p. 290
[117] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, pp. 48-49
[118] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 250-251, 125
[119] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, p. 66

travelled from Jaffa to Jerusalem, viewed the locomotive as a metaphor for Western modernity's incursion into a slumbering land: with a quotation from the Book of Nahum, he emphasised that 'where was once "the noise of a whip and the noise of the rattling of the wheels and of the pransing horses, and of the jumping chariots" there is now only the puffing of the locomotive and the rattle of the tourist train'.[120]

**Figure 9.3:**
**"The Train from Jaffa to Jerusalem",**
***The Land That Is Desolate* by Frederick Treves,**
**facing page 22**

Travellers reacted similarly to the railway cutting across northern Palestine. In *The Inner Life of Syria*, Isabel Burton admitted 'there is nothing I should look upon with more horror than a railway defiling that pure and sacred ground with its accompaniments of European vice and drink', although she resigned herself to the project because of the benefits it would bring for Britain's involvement in the Ottoman Empire, being 'for the aggrandizement of my Motherland'.[121] This contradictory impulse, that Palestine's "opening up" signified a tragic loss yet at the same time

[120] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 26
[121] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 2, p. 283

provided advantages to Britain, was at the heart of the British 'discourse of development' during the Mandate period, as Mark LeVine has noted.[122]

Long before work began on the Haifa extension, British travellers also saw strategic value in a railway in northern Palestine. In his essay "The Haven of Carmel", Conder advocated Haifa's connection by rail with Syrian cities, Nablus and Jerusalem, to support his vision of Palestine's colonisation and the transformation of Haifa into a bulwark of European military strength and trade.[123] Twelve years later, a decade into the First *Aliyah*, and shortly before the opening of the Jaffa to Jerusalem line, Conder evaluated rail's utility in connection with its possibilities for Zionist settlers. While Conder claimed 'it seemed impossible that a railway could pay if it depended on the actual population and on the annual visitors to the Holy Land', he argued that 'a sudden increase in [settler] population would alter the case'. The settlers could use 'railways, […] the pioneers of civilisation', to ease the 'occupation of lands which, in future, will be reached by a few hours' journey, instead of several days of toilsome march, with pack-animals or camels'.[124]

Oliphant was a witness to the initial surveying of the northern route in the early 1880s. Oliphant's support for rail hinged on the economic benefits it would bring, which could be exploited by European investment. Oliphant expressed his belief that a railway on this route would 'tap one of the richest grain-producing districts in the East', and lead to the drainage of the marshes around Beisan, making the area 'the most profitable region in Palestine'. Ultimately, he wrote, 'both natives and foreigners are not a little excited at the prospect which is now being opened to them, and which promises to be the dawn of a new era of prosperity for the country'; whilst the first concession held by the Lebanese banking family the Sursuqs 'lapsed in consequence of difficulties which arose at the last moment', he had 'little doubt' that the construction of the railway would be 'ultimately accomplished'.[125] As discussed in Chapter Eleven, Oliphant planned a railway connecting his envisioned Jewish colony east of the Jordan to Haifa and other key locations in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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[122] LeVine, "The Discourses of Development in Mandate Palestine"
[123] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Haven of Carmel", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 125, No. 759 (January 1879), 35-42. Conder's article demonstrates that a northern railway line in Palestine was proposed several years earlier than the date given by Yair Safran and Tamir Goren in their article "Ideas and Plans to Construct a Railroad in Northern Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 5 (September 2010), 753-770
[124] Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", pp. 866-867
[125] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 63-68

Explicitly addressing the benefits which railway transportation would bring for the West was George Adam Smith; as mentioned in Chapter Six, Smith was an opponent of Zionist settler colonisation, though he advocated Palestine's metropolitan colonisation by Britain. In *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, Smith wrote that for Palestine, 'the most important material innovation from the West is the railway'; however, he qualified this by stating that 'the line just completed between Jaffa and Jerusalem will be useful, it seems, only for pilgrims. Much more effect on the future of Syria may be expected from the line which follows the natural routes of commerce and war through the land from Haifa to Damascus'. In strongly Eurocentric terms, Smith spelled out his expectations for the Damascus to Haifa railway:

> Not only will it open up the most fertile parts of the country, and bring back European civilisation to where it once was supreme, on the east of Jordan; but if ever European arms return to the country – as, in a contest for Egypt or for the Holy Places, when may they not return? – this railway running from the coast across the central battle-field of Palestine will be of immense strategic value.[126]

Goodrich-Freer finally witnessed the construction of the Hijaz Railway line in the early twentieth century. In her *In a Syrian Saddle* she cited Smith's prognosis of the railway's opportunities; yet her own evaluation of what she called 'the iron monster' and 'a scar on the face of the landscape', reverted to the critiques of earlier travellers. To Goodrich-Freer, as to the observers of the Jaffa to Jerusalem line, the northern railway seemed to make a mockery of history and nature. 'We were glad, some of us', she wrote after encountering the construction work on the line east of the Jordan,

> when we had reached and crossed the unshamed anachronism, and, forgetting the noise that would break the silence of the plain, the smoke that would soil its purity, the advertisement, the competition, with their attendant vulgarity and vice, we could throw ourselves again into the arms of Nature, and listen to the voices of our Mother Earth.

Similarly she wrote of Beisan, that 'unfortunately, the railroad will soon be here, and who knows how long this beautiful city may escape all the influences which have corrupted and vulgarised Jerusalem?'[127] This attitude towards the railways, a deeply

[126] George Adam Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, Especially in Relation to the History of Israel and of the Early Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), pp. 20-21
[127] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, pp. 72-74, 316-317

engrained discourse developed by a string of travellers, revealed both a Romantic antagonism to modern technology, and travellers' beliefs about colonisation and indigenous Palestinian society: travellers were sure of the West's ability to deeply infiltrate Palestine before the outright assumption of control. This was a dynamic also present, though in quite different ways, in their attitude to urban spaces, as discussed next.

## CHAPTER TEN

## 'The East is Unveiled to You': The Representation of Palestinian Cities

This chapter focuses on traveller-writers' representations of urban landscapes. Whilst the Palestinian countryside prompted thoughts of the Biblical past and prospects for colonisation in the future, in urban areas travellers were confronted with an unfamiliar indigenous society, increasingly marked by the presence of European institutions, commerce, and settler colonial projects reflective of the West's struggle over late Ottoman Palestine. Travellers' responses to the towns and cities of Palestine were complex, the travelogues frequently exhibiting antagonism to urban spaces *vis-à-vis* the countryside. Nevertheless, the theme of colonisation did run strongly through the depiction of towns, as it did with the countryside.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first analyses travellers' attitudes towards the cities of Palestine, firstly in general terms drawn from traveller-writers' comments applicable to urban environments found across Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean, then in more specific terms, focusing on different representations of the most visited towns and cities. Excepted in this section are Nablus and Haifa, the representations of which are the subjects of the more detailed case studies of sections two and three. Nablus remained one of Palestine's largest cities throughout the period, whilst Haifa expanded from a small village in the mid-nineteenth century to a sizeable port town by 1914; Nablus had an overwhelming Muslim majority with small Christian and Samaritan communities, whilst Haifa was more diverse with a Christian majority; Nablus was located in Palestine's mountainous interior, while Haifa on the Mediterranean coast seemed to face Europe. Yet both Nablus and Haifa attracted many Western visitors, and both were undergoing processes of modernisation and absorption into the world economy, which did not escape the notice of more observant traveller-writers. Both cities have also attracted much attention from more recent historians, who have cast and recast light onto the cities' development. I draw on this historical research, situating travellers' judgements alongside it to both contextualise their Orientalist views and to identify the occasions on which travellers' reports were more insightful.

## I.I: 'Noiseless Upon the Crumbling Soil': Traveller-Writers and the Palestinian City

British traveller-writers in Palestine displayed a contradictory attitude to the cities of the Holy Land in their travelogues. On one hand, most of the Judeo-Christian sites they wished to visit (whilst often maintaining a fierce scepticism as to the authenticity of those sites) and the communities in which they had a particular interest, such as the Jews and the Samaritans, were concentrated in Palestine's urban centres. On the other, travellers frequently evinced discomfort at coming face to face with the non-Western society they encountered in the cities and towns. They expressed a marked preference for "tent life" in the countryside, which in their imaginations contained more Biblical connotations, rather than the time they spent in the built-up areas. The main focus of Palestine travel became the time spent between, rather than in, cities; in the words of Eliot Warburton in *The Crescent and the Cross*,

> Travel in the East is the occupation of your whole time, not a mere passage from one place of residence to another; the haunts of men soon become distasteful, and their habits irksome, to one accustomed to the wild freedom and perfect independence of an Eastern wanderer's life: the very hardships of the latter have a charm, and its dangers an excitement, all unknown to the European traveller.[1]

Representing the 'distasteful' and 'irksome' cities often gave traveller-writers the opportunity to make some of their most Orientalist and anti-Palestinian statements.

A highly influential trope on the Islamic city was provided at an early stage in the period studied in this thesis by Alexander Kinglake in *Eothen*. 'The Moslem quarter of a city is lonely and desolate', Kinglake claimed. 'You go up and down, and on over shelving and hillocky paths through the narrow lanes walled in by blank, windowless dwellings'. Instead of meeting people in the streets, travellers encountered 'the rubbish of centuries', 'big, wolf-like dogs lying torpid under the sun', and 'storks, or cranes, sitting fearless upon the low roofs', and air heavy with 'the dry, dead perfume of strange spices'. Associating cities with the Orientalist tropes of death, silence and stasis, Kinglake continued that 'the foot falls noiseless upon the crumbling soil of an Eastern city, and Silence [sic] follows you still'. It was a vision of the alien, crumbling,

[1] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), pp. 214-215

forbidding Oriental city (fig. 10.1). When the traveller did come across 'turbans, and faces of men', Kinglake complained that the inhabitants of cities 'have nothing for you – no welcome – no wonder – no wrath – no scorn', and viewed the Western visitor as an 'unaccountable, uncomfortable work of God'.[2] With *Eothen* becoming a canonical text for travellers to Palestine, something of Kinglake's vivid picture filtered into many travellers' representations of cities.

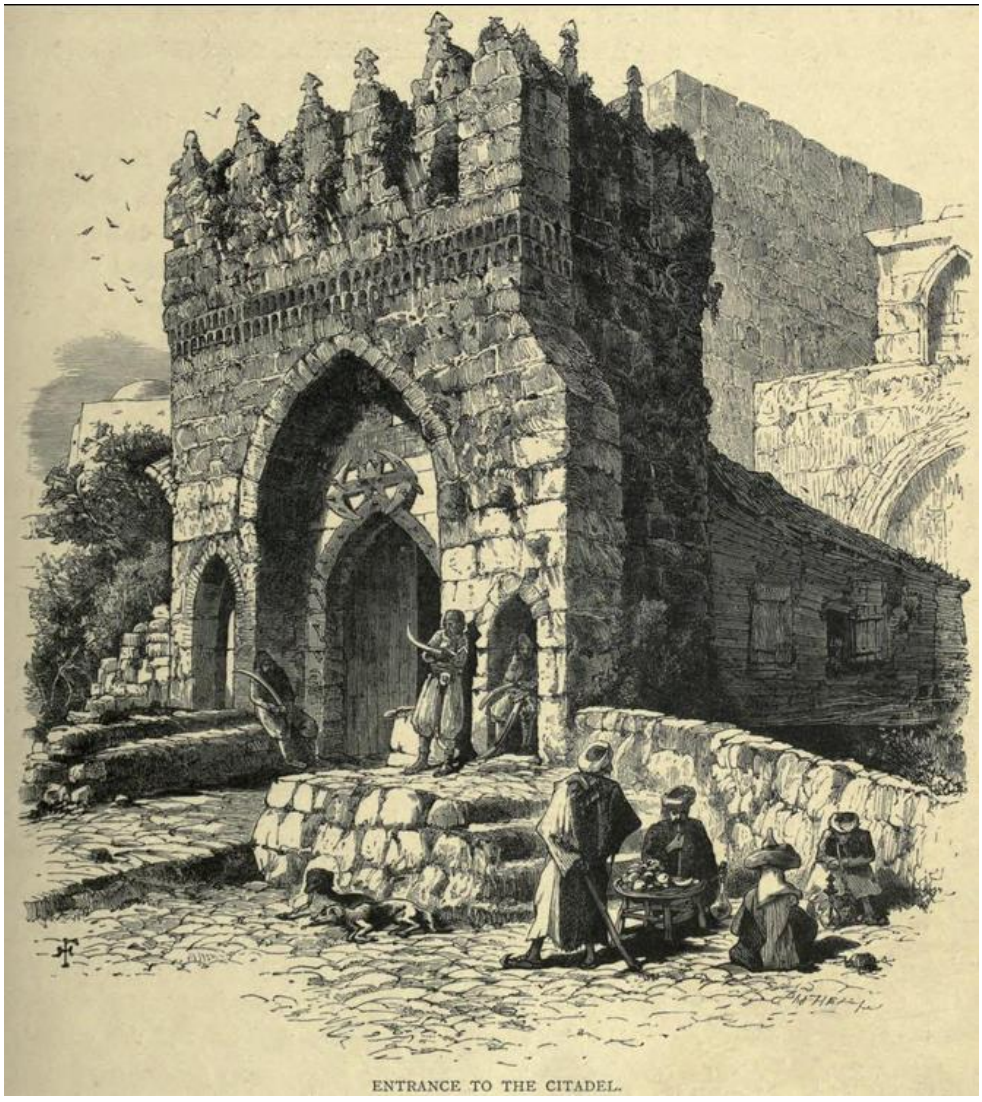


**Figure 10.1:**
**"Entrance to the Citadel" (Jerusalem),**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, page 3**

[2] Alexander W. Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home From the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), pp. 7-8

A number of travellers contrasted cities in the Eastern Mediterranean with Western cities, usually to the detriment of the former. For example, William Hepworth Dixon complained in *The Holy Land* that 'gaieties of any kind are rare' in Palestinian cities. Whilst this might have the advantage that there were 'none of the impure public revelries which help to seduce the young in London, Paris, and New York', such a notion – misleading, as shown by the accounts of vibrant religious festivities, café culture and public storytelling recounted in Mary Eliza Rogers's *Domestic Life in Palestine* – contributed to the "Kinglakean" view of the cities as dull, grey places. Dixon scoffed that the inhabitants of the cities 'seek their homes and beds about the hour at which men in London are sitting down to dine'.[3] David Morison Ross in his *The Cradle of Christianity* denigrated the appearance of Palestinian towns with a Eurocentric criteria, writing that the traveller 'will be disappointed if he expects to see beautiful cities, like Edinburgh or Florence', because

> The cities of Palestine proper are not beautiful, though some of them can boast of a picturesque situation. They have no fine gardens or squares, no spacious streets or handsome shops, and whatever may be their attractions, neither cleanliness nor airiness is amongst the number. The lover of the "Row," [Savile Row in London] or of the Paris boulevard, will feel ill at ease in the David Street of Jerusalem or the bazaars of Nablous.[4]

Ironically, travellers usually also expressed distaste when they wrote about cities in the Eastern Mediterranean which were undergoing a process of Westernisation. For example, in *The Holy Land*, John Kelman lamented the fact that 'the habits of the West are […] invading towns. Intoxicating liquors are freely sold, and in Nazareth there are now no fewer than seventeen public-houses. "Paris fashions" – probably belated – are ousting the ancient customs'. He even noted that 'knives and forks have penetrated native houses even in Hebron'.[5] By contrast, travellers believed that Palestine's villages, though "primitive", were a more faithful reproduction of life in Biblical times. Behind this lay the belief that Palestine was, or should be, an unchanging, Biblical ideal.

[3] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1869 [1865]), pp. 216-217
[4] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), p. 3
[5] John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London Adam & Charles Black, 1902), pp. 78-79

Similarly, traveller-writers expressed a disinclination towards the residents of cities. Western travellers divided Palestine's population into three sections. In the words of James Neil in his *Everyday Life in the Holy Land*, these were 'the three distinct conditions of Eastern life, the *bedaween*, the *fellahheen*, and the *belladeen*'.[6] If the nomadic Bedouin resembled the wandering Israelite patriarchs, and the *fellahin* peasantry reminded travellers of the people of Christ's day, the city-dwelling class of Muslim and Christian landowners, merchants and notables were the odd ones out, without Biblical connotations and thus seeming less authentic. Most travellers had few dealings with townspeople in Palestine. Travellers preferred to stay in tents outside the cities, in the accommodation provided by monasteries, or, from the late nineteenth century, in hotels operated by Europeans, such as the German Colony hotels in Jaffa and Haifa. Kelman accurately generalised that 'the traveller comes into contact with the townspeople far less fully than with the villagers'.[7]

Laurence Oliphant, who during his extended stay in Palestine came across more city-dwellers than did more casual travellers, in his *Haifa* provided a sneering portrait of the urban notable class, whom he claimed 'generally speak either French or Italian, have visited Paris, Constantinople, or Alexandria, and have a thin varnish of European civilization overlaying their native barbarism'. Oliphant represented the Palestinian urban elite as a semi-barbarous petty bourgeoisie, their houses complete with 'a three-hundred-dollar piano, on which the lady never plays; and […] pictures, of which the frames are more artistic than the subjects', and with limited 'conversational powers and ideas […] which is not to be wondered at, considering that there is not a book in the house'.[8] The poorer masses of the cities seemed to the travellers alien and threatening, as illustrated in the section on Nablus below.

One area in which cities seemed to fulfil travellers' expectations was as exhibits of an exotic, *Arabian Nights*-style Orient. It was in the cities which were not yet highly Westernised that travellers could find, in Said's words, the Orient's 'strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth'.[9] William Thackeray in his *Notes of a Journey* wrote of his visits to Izmir/Smyrna and to Istanbul on his way to Palestine, making the Turkish cities a synecdoche for the whole of "the East":

[6] James Neil, *Everyday Life in the Holy Land* (London: Cassell and Company, 1913), p. 1
[7] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 79
[8] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), pp. 114-116
[9] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 72

> Walk into the bazaar, and the East is unveiled to you: how often and often have you tried to fancy this, lying out on a summer holiday at school! It is wonderful, too, how *like* it is: you may imagine that you have been in the place before, you seem to know it so well!

While the sights of these cities might be picturesque, travellers also thought them superficial, already essentially known by Westerners even before setting foot in them, through the *Arabian Nights* or Oriental travelogues. As Thackeray claimed – a true Brit, not missing a chance to rib the French – 'a person who wishes to understand France or the East should come in a yacht to Calais or Smyrna, land for two hours, and never afterwards go back again'.[10]

Damascus featured in many of the travelogues as the supreme Orientalist fantasy; among cities in Palestine, there were hints of this in the representations of Jerusalem, 'Akka and Nablus. Generally, however Western travellers to Palestine thought of themselves as undertaking a quest nobler than excursions in other parts of the Orient, a Protestant pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This predisposed them to prefer the countryside to urban environments. As Elizabeth Rundle Charles wrote in her *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas*, 'those Eastern cities carry you into the Arabian Nights. The country, on the other hand, recalls you to the Bible'.[11] This was representative of a broader trend in nineteenth century Western travel writing, in which travellers depicted their journeys as flights from modernity and urbanisation, in search of the "authenticity" in non-urban regions of the world; in the case of Palestine, that authenticity was Biblical truth itself.[12]

Travellers were explicit in stating their appreciation of rural Palestine over urban Palestine, an attitude which predominated throughout the whole period. For instance, Warburton stated that

> Towns in the East are so disagreeable, and have so few resources, the country is so beautiful and full of interest, that I always felt a lively

[10] William Makepeace Thackeray [Mr. M.A. Titmarsh], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), pp. 82-83

[11] Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), p. 25

[12] Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 60. See also James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to 'Culture' 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 28

> pleasure in passing out from the guarded gates of some old city to return to the tent and the wild pathway of the plain or mountain.[13]

Already mentioned has been the preference of Western travellers to stay in tents outside the limits of towns and cities, with their own attendants to supply all their needs (fig.10.2). This "self-catering" attitude, often maintained by travellers even at great expense (the tour guide Haskett Smith provided figures of 27 attendants and 45 animals necessary for a group of eleven English tourists in *Patrollers of Palestine*), symbolised Westerners' self-imposed isolation from Palestine's towns and their residents.[14] Josias Leslie Porter noted in his *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* that 'travellers, when about to spend a few days or weeks at a town or village, generally rent a garden and live there', for not only was 'the fresh balmy air of the country […] far preferable to the close, stifling atmosphere of an Eastern city', but Porter also claimed that privacy was impossible for travellers who stayed as guests in cities, as 'the one apartment in which the males sit, sleep, and eat, is open to all comers'.[15]

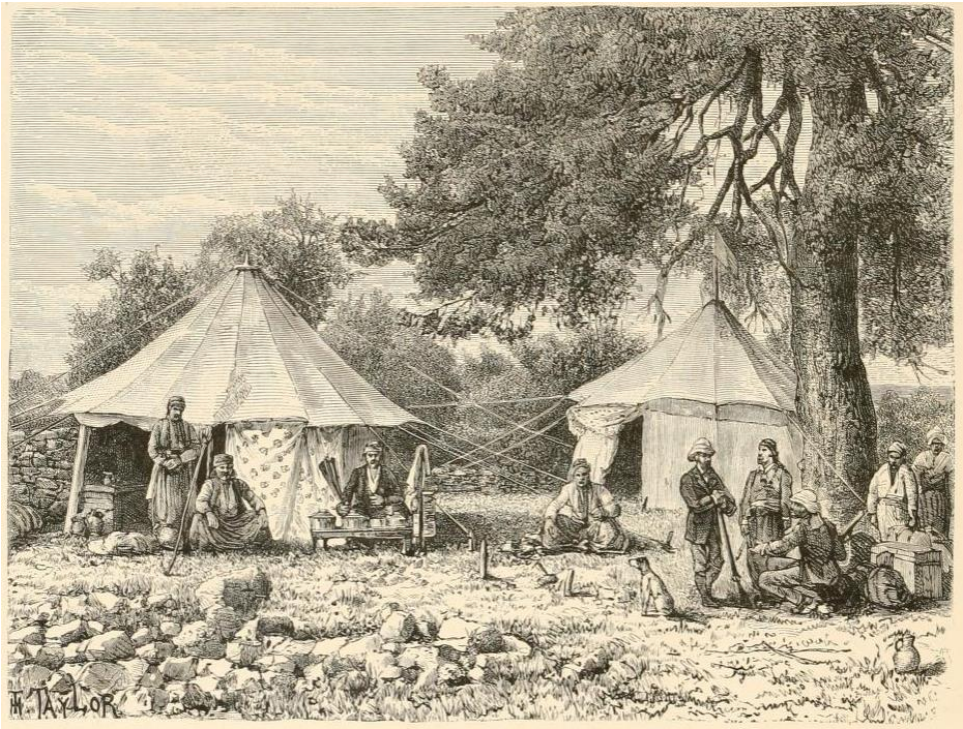


**Figure 10.2:**
**"Travellers' Camp",**
***Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**page 100**

[13] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, p. 214
[14] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), pp. 325-326
[15] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), p. 102

Urban locales in Palestine were associated with dirt, disorder and miasmatic smells: as Charles Biggs wrote in his *Six Months in Jerusalem*, in Jerusalem there were 'smells […] so foul that there is constant risk of fevers'.[16] Travellers' views of cities closely resembled Frantz Fanon's articulation of European colonisers' or settlers' views of the Arab city, in which 'the colonised's sector, or at least the "native" quarters, the shanty town, the Medina, the reservation, is a disreputable place inhabited by disreputable people. […] It's a world with no space, people are piled one on top of the other, the shacks squeezed tightly together'.[17] To this kind of environment were juxtaposed the open landscapes of the country, in which travellers focused on nature and the remnants of Biblical ruins. Kelman wrote that 'the scents of the East add to the delightfulness of Nature on her pleasant side' and that 'the open country is continually surprising and refreshing its travellers with new perfume'.[18] Palestine's cities were considered as best viewed from afar amidst natural surroundings, preferably from a height such as the Mount of Olives over Jerusalem, the view from which Henry Baker Tristram in his *The Land of Israel* described as 'a glorious burst', or the hills around Nazareth, where the traveller could feel physically as well as morally elevated over the Palestinian inhabitants. A panoramic view from a distance was considered preferable to a more intimate view at street level, which would necessitate rubbing shoulders with the locals. This was a sentiment continually expressed about many cities by travellers, with Tristram commenting that Nazareth was 'fair at a distance, mean when near'.[19] In his *A Journalist in the Holy Land*, Arthur Copping admitted that 'to see a Palestine town, if from afar, carried me one stage further in a thrilling experience', but that they 'appealed rather to the mental than the physical sight'.[20] Views from distant vantage points looking down upon Palestinian towns were not only commonly described in the travelogues, but were also a popular subject for Orientalist painters such as David Roberts (1796-1864) who toured the Eastern Mediterranean in the late 1830s, and the illustrators of the Palestine travelogues (fig. 10.3).

[16] Charles Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem: Impressions of the Work of England in and for the Holy City* (London: Mowbray and Co., 1896), p. 106
[17] Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 4
[18] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 208
[19] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), pp. 171, 123
[20] Arthur E. Copping, *A Journalist in the Holy Land: Glimpses of Egypt and Palestine* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), p. 54

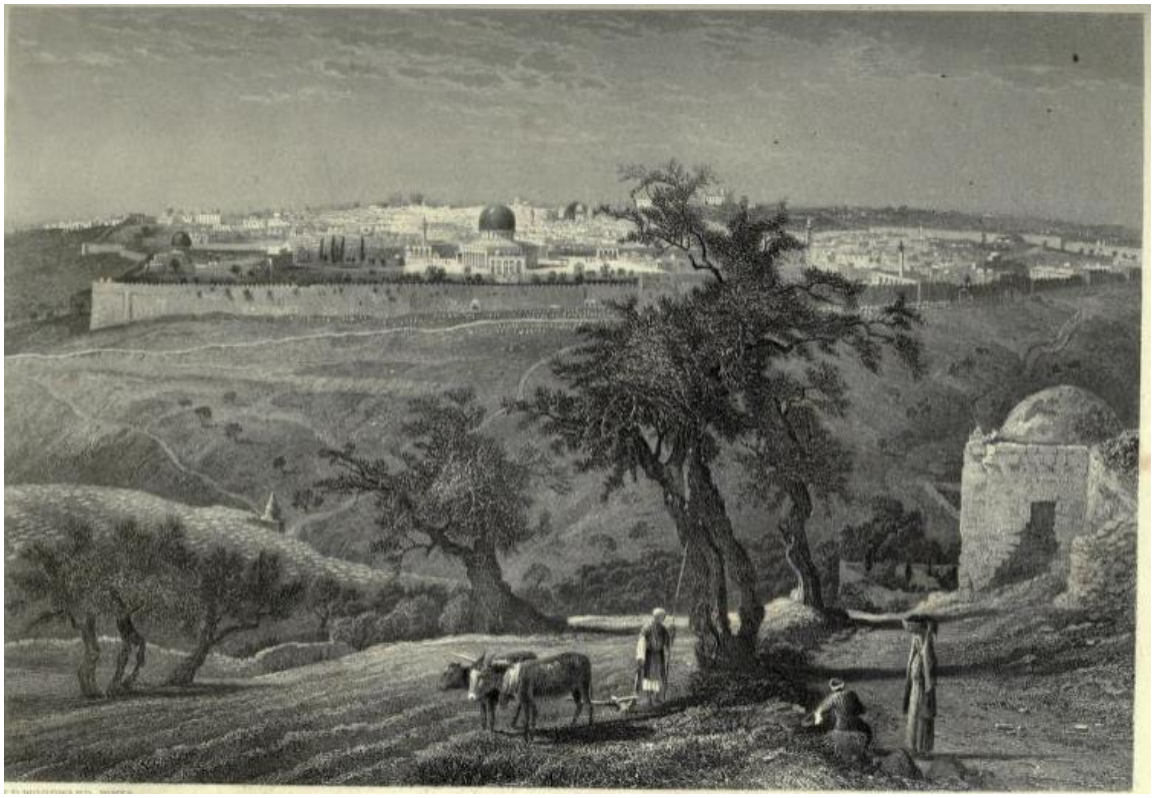

**Figure 10.3:**
**"Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 1, facing page 4**

Cities were not to be entered lightly, and not to be stayed within overnight if possible. Whilst travellers could feel comfortable, with their Bibles to "guide" them, in Palestine's rural areas, despite the actually greater dangers in remote regions, the urban areas of Palestine were more of a *terra incognita* for Western visitors, necessitating a closer contact with Palestinian society, which most travellers neither understood nor appreciated. In the travelogues, their authors frequently revelled in describing the landscape, or recounting the Biblical and ancient histories of towns, rather than providing a detailed and vivid picture of life within them. Some interesting portraits of cities did emerge in the travelogues, as discussed below; yet the attitudes discussed above were widely held by Western travellers in Palestine.

## I.II: 'The City of Death and the City of Life': Urban Itineraries across Palestine

Whilst many travellers viewed most Palestinian towns and cities as a sideshow to the Biblical rural landscapes, traveller-writers nonetheless visited all the settled communities of significant size in Palestine and left representations of them. Different towns were represented in different ways drawing deeply upon the Eurocentric, Orientalist and proto-Zionist outlooks of the travellers. In the holy cities of Judaism, they could focus on the Jewish presence in Palestine; in the Christian-majority towns, they could put forth the case for the redeeming effect of Christianity, whilst denigrating Islam in Muslim-majority towns; in 'Akka they could revisit the era of the Crusades; whilst in Jerusalem they could present a view of the city derived from Biblical archaeology. Views of towns were also highly subjective, with travellers frequently expressing contradicting opinions on the same locations. This section briefly presents on the range of views of travellers on Palestine's major towns.

Jaffa, Palestine's main seaport through most of the late Ottoman period, was frequently the point of entry of travellers from the West into Palestine. Jaffa attracted around 8000 tourists each travel season before 1914.[21] Representations of Jaffa in the travelogues often took the form of "first impressions" of Palestine, a rather chaotic Oriental environment, with Biblical sites of dubious authenticity. Many travellers commented on their precarious arrival at the port, which involved being transferred from steam ship to a smaller vessel which could navigate the rocks to land at the port, one of 'a number of boats, manned by half-naked Arabs, howling, yelling, and fighting like demons', as Samuel Manning wrote in his *"Those Holy Fields"*.[22] This lent prosaic, even disappointing, tinge to travellers' arrival in the Holy Land.

Within Jaffa, travellers were confronted with a strong non-Western and Islamic presence, which could shock the visitor to Palestine who expected a land permeated by traces of the ancient Judeo-Christian past. Dixon noted that Jaffa's Oriental features, such as its mosques and palms, might on paper sound 'soft and homely to a reader of the Bible and the Arabian Nights', in fact 'Mohammedan Jaffa is a town in the last degree new and strange to a Frank'. Like other travellers, Dixon heaped scorn upon Jaffa's most notable Biblical site, the house of the early Christian convert Simon

[21] Frederick Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate: An Account of a Tour in Palestine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1912), p. 11
[22] Samuel Manning, *"Those Holy Fields.": Palestine, Illustrated by Pen and Pencil* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), p. 13

the Tanner, writing that 'not a house in Jaffa is of greater age than the houses in Soho Square'.[23]

These perceptions of Jaffa began to change, yet were simultaneously reinforced, with the establishment of European settler colonial projects in the vicinity, including the German Templar colony of Sarona founded in 1871. These provided travellers with a contrast with the Palestinian Jaffa: as Ross expressed, 'what a contrast between old Jaffa with its dirt and din, and Sarona with its cleanliness and peace!'[24] Porter made explicit the connection between the fertility of Jaffa's environs and its prospects for colonisation, noting that the colonists were 'attracted by a soil of unsurpassed fertility and a grand climate', since 'nowhere in world are the orange-groves more luxuriant or the fruit of finer flavour'.[25]

After arriving in Jaffa, most travellers continued on to Jerusalem. Before 1892 with the opening of the Jaffa-Jerusalem railway, this meant following a well-worn route by carriage or on horseback. The route took travellers through Ramla, a town with a strong Islamic heritage founded in the eighth century under the Umayyad Dynasty. Traveller-writers took the opportunity to make judgements on a golden age of Islam and its supposed subsequent decline. For example, Claude Reignier Conder in *Tent Work in Palestine* recorded that 'here and there an ornate Cufic or Arabic [sic] inscription is left, telling of Moslem conquerors and munificent Caliphs', but that now 'the bazaars are deserted, and starved dogs and helpless lepers meet the eye on every side'.[26] Travellers continued to pass through the town after 1892 and view it through the train window; Haskett Smith gave a superficial but more positive view of Ramla, describing it as 'a large and flourishing town, of a very attractive appearance'.[27]

Jerusalem was the major point of interest in Palestine and the urban highlight of most travellers' journeys. Travellers stayed longer in Jerusalem, toured it more thoroughly, and wrote more about it in greater detail than any other urban location. Jerusalem spawned its own travelogues, such as William Henry Bartlett's *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*. Western travellers' attitudes to the city are complex enough to be the topic of their own book; for this reason, and the fact that the prime places of interest to the travellers, the holy places of the Haram al-Sharif, Church

[23] Dixon, *Holy Land*, pp. 8, 21
[24] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 171-172
[25] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, p. x
[26] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), p. 4
[27] Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine*, p. 57

of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall, are discussed elsewhere in this thesis, discussion of the representation of Jerusalem here is kept brief.

One of the most overriding first reactions to the Palestinian city was disappointment. Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés have noted that 'modern travel writing is a literature of disappointment'; this is especially true of traveller-writers' reports of the Palestine they found, and of Jerusalem in particular. Jerusalem was painted as a microcosm of all that was disappointing about Palestine.[28] Several travellers pointed out that the existing Jerusalem fell far short of the mental picture they had of the city in its Biblical splendour, in the words of Norman Macleod in his *Eastward*, 'a Jerusalem of their [travellers'] own – full of the beautiful, the sacred, the holy, and the good'.[29] Conder bore no love for most of the aesthetics of Jerusalem, stating that 'there is nothing in the site or architecture of Jerusalem, as a whole, which can save it from the imputation of ugliness'.[30] Andrew Russell complained in his *Glimpses of Eastern Cities* of 'the filthy and uncomfortable nature of the accommodation, the want of pure water, the disagreeable smells constantly to be encountered'. He exclaimed dramatically, 'alas that the holiness of Jerusalem should be so much more imaginary than real! Like the rest of the so-called Holy Land, it is full of wickedness, immorality, and superstition'.[31] These were qualities attributable, in travellers' minds, to the Palestinians resident in the city, whose beliefs and styles of worship clashed uncomfortably with Westerners' views of what was appropriate.

Western travellers viewed Jerusalem as a domain exclusively of religion and the past, not as a space of secular and modern activity. 'Religion is much in evidence', Ross stated emphatically: 'Jerusalem lives upon religion. In respect of art and science, literature and philosophy, civil life and commerce, it is nowhere […] Religion is in the atmosphere'.[32] In his *Walks About Jerusalem*, J.E. Hanauer labelled Jerusalem 'a museum of fossilized forms of religious profession'.[33] The vast majority of this religion, Islamic, Christian and Jewish, provoked the antipathies of Protestant travellers; as Oliphant wrote, Jerusalem contained 'within its walls more sacred shams and

[28] Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Introduction: Travel and the Problem of Modernity", in Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books 1999), p. 5
[29] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 120
[30] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 162-163
[31] Andrew Russell, *Glimpses of Eastern Cities Past and Present. Lectures Delivered on Sunday Evenings in Leslie Parish Churches* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1890), p. 8
[32] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity* pp. 59-60
[33] J.E. Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, 1910), p. 30

impostures than any other city in the world'.[34] When modern, secular activity, often a result of the increasing Western influence in Jerusalem, was noted, it seemed to visitors pathetic, even blasphemous, like the 'tennis or croquet played by the English residents, and […] the advertisements of tourists' agencies being hung on the walls of the Holy City' reported by Biggs.[35]

Travellers often represented Jerusalem as a palimpsest, a blank slate upon which successive invaders had written their conquests and on which future conquerors might still inscribe. It became a trope to claim the current street level was the result of layers of 'rubbish' heaped upon the Biblical-era streets; Charles, for example, claimed that 'the present wretched town' had been 'built far above the ruins of the old, on heaps of rubbish'.[36] This attitude devalued the existing Jerusalem in favour of the ancient, and spurred the activity of Biblical archaeologists in the city, such as the Palestine Exploration Fund's excavations of the 1860s led by Charles Warren and Charles Wilson.[37] It was a secret knowledge which the indigenous inhabitants of the city were thought to be unaware, and could only be appreciated by Westerners. 'One of the wonders' of Jerusalem, Helen B. Harris claimed in her *Pictures of the East*, was to know that 'deep underground, beneath the tread of the busy multitude of all nationalities that throng the leading streets of modern Jerusalem, lie the remains of successive buried cities of the past'; it was up to 'the pick and the spade' to recover these lost Jerusalems.[38]

Traveller-writers were not immune from observing the modernisation of Jerusalem occurring throughout the late Ottoman period. Many travellers noted the construction of new buildings and neighbourhoods outside the walls. Like the Russian Compound discussed in Chapter Five, a number of the most prominent buildings were constructed by Britain's European rivals. This prejudiced some against the new construction and to prefer the old Jerusalem, which though ramshackle, dirty, and filled with religious 'impostures', at least seemed to conform to their Orientalist expectations. Porter, for instance, complained that 'the City of the Great King, the Holy City of the Crusaders, the picturesque City of the Saracens and Turks, is at the present time

[34] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 296
[35] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, p. 60
[36] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 63
[37] See Charles Warren, *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained.* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1876)
[38] Helen B. Harris, *Pictures of the East: Sketches of Biblical Scenes in Palestine and Greece* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1897), p. 6

almost covered and concealed by the tasteless structures of modern traders and ambitious foreign devotees'.[39] Traveller-writers also viewed the "new city" which grew outside the walls as something totally separate from the old, an area of forward-looking, Western-inspired activity rather than backward religious custom. 'There are two Jerusalems', wrote John Kelman, 'the old one within the walls, and a new one spreading on the open ground to the west and north. This "new Levantine city side by side with the old Oriental city" is quite a modern place'.[40] This view would find expression in the British city planning for Jerusalem after 1917, when the British authorities sought to concentrate industry and commerce in the Jewish-dominated areas outside the walls, whilst treating the increasingly cramped area inside the walls as the Palestinian Muslim and Christian domain.[41]

From Jerusalem, travellers could travel northwards, via Nablus, to the Galilee and beyond; eastwards, it was a short distance (though a journey requiring Bedouin guides and protection) to the Dead Sea and Jericho, described by most traveller-writers in disparaging terms, though by Frederick Treves in his in his *The Land that is Desolate* as 'a pleasant modern village' and 'a drowsy oasis of red roofs and white walls, with an unexpected chapel and a surprising mosque, with many palms and cypresses, with gardens of tropical luxuriance'; and to the south, Bethlehem (which could be accomplished in a day trip) and Hebron.[42]

Bethlehem was home to the Church of the Nativity, a site which most Western travellers accepted as genuine. Bethlehem also held significant Old Testament interest from the stories of Rachel, Ruth and David. As discussed in Chapter Five, Bethlehem and other Christian-majority towns were often depicted positively, despite the non-Western forms of Christianity which dominated there. Ross, for example, noted the well-cultivated olive terraces around Bethlehem, which he claimed 'bear witness to the industry of the people, who are mostly Christians'. He described the town itself as 'a busy hive of industry' with 'dozens of little workshops for the manufacture of souvenirs from the Holy Land', a direct benefit from the visitors who passed through.[43] While Kelman admitted that 'there is poverty and dirt, and perhaps a little rudeness' in Bethlehem, which he attributed to 'youths who have been in Europe or America' and

[39] Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, pp. xxi-xxii
[40] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 81
[41] Nicholas E. Roberts, "Dividing Jerusalem: British Urban Planning in the Holy City", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Summer 2013), 7-26
[42] Treves, *The Land That Is* Desolate, pp. 138-139
[43] Ross, *Crescent and the Cross*, p. 87

'know English enough to make themselves annoying', in general 'the place is a pleasant place, and its inhabitants are an attractive people'.[44] Treves gave a negative description of the town, describing it as 'a modern town unredeemably ugly'.[45]

If the generally agreeable Christian Bethlehem pointed towards the positive influence which Christianity had upon its adherents, the majority-Muslim city of Hebron or al-Khalil was often portrayed in the travelogues, in Orientalist fashion, as characterised by Islamic fanaticism and stagnation. In Conder's words, 'the contrast between Bethlehem and Hebron is very striking; it is the contrast between Christianity and Islam, between the vitality of the religion of progress and civilisation and the hopeless stagnation of a fatalistic creed'.[46] Hebron was often linked by traveller-writers to another large Muslim-majority town, Nablus, as places with particularly turbulent populations hostile to Western Christians.[47] Nevertheless, Hebron held significant interest to travellers for its small Jewish community and for the Ibrahimi Mosque or Cave of the Patriarchs, the traditional resting place of Abraham and other Old Testament figures. The most high-profile visitor was the Prince of Wales, later to become Edward VII (1841-1910), who visited Palestine in 1862, accompanied by the most prominent Biblical scholar and traveller-writer at the time, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. His description made the city seem dangerous and sullenly resentful of the Westerners' presence:

> Hardly a face was visible as we passed through; only here and there a solitary guard, stationed at a vacant window, or on the flat roof of a projecting house, evidently to guarantee the safety of the party from any chance missile. It was, in fact, a complete military occupation of the town.

Unlike previous non-Muslim travellers, the Prince's party were admitted into the Ibrahimi Mosque, described by Tristram as 'the most ancient and the most authentic of all the Holy Places in the Holy Land'. Stanley's judgement reflected Evangelicals' preference for Old Testament sites which had not already been monopolised by non-Western Churches. Stanley's description of the events inside the Ibrahimi Mosque evidences the British group's pleasure in penetrating a previously closely-guarded Islamic space, after having commanded the Ottoman military in their tour of the town:

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[44] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 222
[45] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 120
[46] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 146
[47] See David Kushner, "Zealous Towns in Nineteenth-Century Palestine", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (July 1997), 597-612

> The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, was thrown open. The guardians groaned aloud. But their chief turned to us with the remark, 'The Princes of any other nation should have passed over my dead body sooner than enter. But to the eldest son of the Queen of England we are willing to accord even this privilege.'[48]

Elizabeth Charles had a different experience of Hebron. While disappointed that 'a crowd of angry-looking idlers, and boys evidently not averse to the use of physical force, began to collect, and we were obliged to content ourselves with inspecting the outside walls' of the Mosque, she reported favourably that Hebron 'was more like a European town (not one in England, certainly, but in some remote part of Italy) than any other place we had seen in Palestine', and that 'there were some faint indications of prosperity and life about it' such as 'abundant wells, water-troughs, gardens, vineyards, walls not in ruins, reservoirs well kept, – even a road in the valley'.[49]

North from Jerusalem lay the road via the small villages of Ramallah and al-Bireh, Nablus, and other villages and rural sites which travellers interpreted as being once-great locations of the Biblical narrative. North of Nablus was Jenin, identified by travellers as the Biblical 'Ain Gannim. Tristram described it as 'for Syria, a tolerably flourishing town, but of bad repute for robberies and Mussulman fanaticism', but Ada Goodrich-Freer provided a more detailed report in her *In a Syrian Saddle*.[50] She described Jenin's 'main street, substantial houses two storeys high on either side of us; here a large *serai* (court-house), there a gaily-lighted coffee-house thronged with guests; gardens and palm-trees among the houses; obvious well-being everywhere'.[51]

Upon arriving on the outskirts of Nazareth, many traveller-writers reported ecstatic emotions as they pictured the young Christ treading the same pathways around the town. 'Every path and rugged track must have often been trodden by Him in childhood', gushed Tristram, 'and for what else would we exchange the mystic charm of those bare and stony hills?'[52] Attitudes about the urban Nazareth varied drastically, however; Manning praised Nazareth for having 'a brighter, cleaner, and more prosperous look' than most other towns, but Treves complained that it was 'a poor place, a town of narrow and dirty streets, of unwholesome houses, of miserable

[48] Quoted in Professor Palmer, "The Southern Borderland" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 3, 193-216, pp. 198-199.
[49] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 131
[50] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 131
[51] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co., 1905), p. 224
[52] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 123

slums, and of by-ways that stink with a stink not soon to be forgotten'.[53] Many travellers were left cold by the traditional holy sites under the custodianship of non-Protestant Churches; as Ross wrote, 'nowhere is the traveller more irritated than at Nazareth with "holy places"'.[54] The proliferation of European missionary institutions also deterred British travellers, with Goodrich-Freer complaining of 'the superfluous philanthropy and multiplication of benevolent institutions', which presumably contributed to her judgement of 'the unattractiveness of the modern town'.[55]

In Safad and Tiberias, traveller-writers focused almost exclusively on the Jewish communities of these towns, as discussed in Chapter Six. Almost all traveller-writers represented the cities as particularly dirty, possibly drawing on the anti-Semitic trope of Jewish uncleanliness. Macleod admitted that he 'never entered [Tiberias], as I more and more felt that any supposed gain to my stock of information from the spectacles of filth and poverty which I knew it contained would only be a loss to me in seeking to realise the holy past'.[56] Manning wrote that Tiberias was 'filthy and squalid beyond even the average of eastern towns'; Goodrich-Freer dismissed it as 'a squalid townlet'; H. Rider Haggard wrote in *A Winter Pilgrimage* that its 'bazaars are narrow and foul beyond conception'; and Treves averred that Tiberias was 'a wretched and stinking place', with 'the hygiene of neolithic man'.[57] As for Safad, James Finn wrote in his *Byeways in Palestine* that 'the place is exceedingly healthy, enjoying the purest mountain air'.[58] Others, however, made claims of its lack of hygiene; Oliphant identified it as 'the most odoriferous and pestiferous place that it has ever been my fate to sleep in'.[59]

The last major Palestinian towns which were frequently visited by traveller-writers were 'Akka or Acre, and Haifa. British travellers' interest in 'Akka lay in its history of military confrontations involving Europe, including the naval battles of 1799 when the British fleet helped Ottoman forces to defeat Napoleon's invasion, and of 1840 when Britain helped the Ottomans to retake the city from Egyptian occupation. 'Akka was thus a place where British travellers could take pride in the Empire's military

[53] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 186; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 181-182
[54] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 113
[55] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 261
[56] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 262
[57] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 198; Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 282; H. Rider Haggard, *A Winter Pilgrimage: Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, Accomplished in the Year 1900* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 216; Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, pp. 195-196
[58] James Finn, *Byeways in Palestine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877 [1868]), p. 107
[59] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 69

might. Finn noted in *Stirring Times* that 'it is pleasant to British feeling to find our familiar national names still celebrated at Acre with honour and respect'.[60] Most of all, however, 'Akka conjured images of the Crusades, as it had been the final stronghold of the Crusaders until 1291. Stanley spoke for many when he wrote in his *Sinai and Palestine* 'the singular fate which ['Akka] enjoyed at the close of the Crusades gives it a special interest never to be forgotten by those who in the short space of an hour's walk can pass round its broken walls'.[61] Yet despite 'Akka's importance under Islamic rule, including its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century governors Dahir al-'Umar and Jazzar Pasha whose contributions Conder noted, and its cosmopolitan inhabitants remarked on by Oliphant as 'a population as varied as any town in the country can show', 'Akka was represented in the travelogues as a city caught in Oriental lethargy, waiting for the West to arrive again, in the words of Alexander Boddy in his *Days in Galilee*, at 'the dilapidated fortifications, where old cannon lay, and Turkish soldiers sat mournfully gazing out to sea'.[62]

Whilst many traveller-writers visited the above-mentioned towns and cities, there were urban communities that lay off the routes followed by most Westerners, and which were rarely represented in the travelogues. Notable examples were Gaza, of which Biggs commented that 'its remoteness from Jaffa and the badness of its roads make communication with it very difficult', and Beisan, east of Jenin.[63] Both these received positive representation from travellers who did visit them. Finn described travelling to Gaza along 'an avenue of at least a mile long, very wide like a boulevard, through an immense park of olive grounds, with the city for an object of vista at the end', and warmly reported the scene of the harvest around Gaza: 'cheerful scene of camels and asses bearing the barley-harvest home, attended by women and children; small flocks of sheep also, with their shepherd lads playing sweet and irregular airs on their *nayahs* [Arab flutes]'. Finn was less complimentary about Beisan, 'a wild-looking place […] the people horribly ugly black and ferocious in physiognomy'.[64] Yet Beisan did receive a positive evaluation from Goodrich-Freer, who mentioned its 'boulevard'

[60] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 2, p. 16
[61] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), pp. 265-266
[62] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 101-102; Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 123; Alexander Alfred Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (London: Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 20
[63] Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem*, p. 50
[64] Finn, *Byeways*, pp. 166, 96

lined with trees, two-storeyed stone houses, and khan with ‘a great archway, flanked on either side by magnificent ancient Corinthian pillars’, leading to her evaluation that Beisan was ‘the most beautiful city in Palestine’.[65] If more traveller-writers had as open-minded as Finn in Gaza and Goodrich-Freer in Beisan, towns in Palestine may have received a better representation in the travelogues.

[65] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 311

## II: 'The Most Interesting City in Palestine': Representing Nablus

Nablus, located thirty miles north of Jerusalem in Palestine's mountainous heartland, was one of the most important cities of late Ottoman Palestine. As Beshara Doumani has noted, it was 'Palestine's principal trade and manufacturing centre'.[66] It was also one of the largest cities of Palestine, with Ottoman census figures from the mid-nineteenth century showing a population of 20,000.[67] To Western travellers, it had the multiple interests of being identified with the ancient Canaanite and Israelite city of Shechem, mentioned extensively throughout the Old Testament, being in close proximity to sites associated with Biblical figures such as Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb, and home to the Samaritan community. All this contributed to Nablus being visited and described by many traveller-writers, creating a detailed picture of the city in the travelogues.

### II.I: 'Beloved by Allah Above All Other Places': Representing Nablus's Rural and Urban Environments

The first thing noted by many traveller-writers in their descriptions of Nablus was the environment around the city, in particular the valley in which the city was situated between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim (fig. 10.4). Singing the praises of the countryside around Nablus became one of two dominant tropes about the area featured in the travelogues. To traveller-writers who wished to assert Palestine's desolation and infertility, the environment around Nablus was an exception to the rule which stood in stark contrast to the rest of the landscape; Macleod, for example, wrote 'in the midst of the white, bare, hot hills and plains, it stands alone in its glory of fruit and verdure, of running brooks and singing birds'.[68] On the other hand, to travellers recognising that Palestine was a productive and highly cultivated region, Nablus was

[66] Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 1, 2

[67] Beshara Doumani, "The Political Economy of Population Counts in Ottoman Palestine: Nablus, circa 1850", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (February 1994), 1-17. The census figure is much larger than that given by travellers, such as John Mills, who estimated in 1864 that 'from eight to ten thousand would be nearer the mark' (which would still put Nablus among Palestine's largest towns. In 1905, Ada Goodrich-Freer wrote that Nablus's population 'amounts to over 20,000'. John Mills, *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans* (John Murray, 1864), p. 93; Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 195

[68] Macleod, *Eothen*, p. 232

the best example of this and a sign of what the rest of Palestine might become, given a little work perhaps undertaken by a European colonising force.

**Figure 10.4:**
**"Nâblus and Gerizim from the South-Western Slopes of Ebal",**
***Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, edited by Charles W. Wilson,**
**Volume 2, page 12**

Kinglake wrote that 'the town of Nablus is beautiful; it lies in a valley hemmed in with olive groves, and its buildings are interspersed with frequent palm trees', and of the 'green and smiling' valley.[69] Ridley Haim Herschell in his *A Visit to my Father-Land* commented that Nablus was 'to this day one of the few places in Palestine that are well-watered and fertile'.[70] These terms were positively restrained compared to subsequent portrayals of the area. Stanley wrote that 'Nâblus is the most beautiful, perhaps it might be said the only very beautiful, spot in central Palestine', a beauty derived 'it need hardly be said […] from its abundant supply of water' which 'thus

[69] Kinglake, *Eothen*, p. 360
[70] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to my Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843]), p. 103

secured the perennial glory of its green grassy sward, its olive-groves, its orchards of fig, and vine, and pomegranate'.[71] Elizabeth Charles agreed, writing 'no place to be compared with this in fertility and beauty exists, they say, in Palestine. We had, certainly, seen none'.[72] In her contribution on Nablus in *Picturesque Palestine*, Mary Eliza Rogers claimed that 'all travellers, ancient and modern, speak in glowing terms of the peculiar loveliness of this valley', adding that the contemporary Muslim inhabitants of Nablus 'proudly quote their prophet Muhammed himself as an authority for saying that "it is the place beloved by Allah above all other places"'.[73] Oliphant gushed that 'nothing can exceed in picturesqueness the situation of this place and the beauty of its surroundings, especially when the almond and peach trees are in bloom in the valley'.[74] In his *Village Life in Palestine*, George Robinson Lees penned that Nablus 'enjoys one of the most picturesque and fortunate sites the Holy Land can offer, and appears to be the natural capital of the country'.[75]

There were a few notes of moderation among these panegyrics, which pointed to the underlying motives behind the celebrations of Nablus's hinterland. Macleod, while agreeing that while 'nothing in Palestine surpasses the picturesqueness of this spot when looked at from any of the surrounding heights', added that 'should any one penetrate' the natural groves around Nablus, 'he would find little of the art which helps Nature to produce that ideal of the beautiful after which she struggles. The grass grows wild, the ground is rough, while tangled shrubs and branches mingle with the trees as in a long-neglected garden'.[76] Palestine's representation as 'long-neglected' was a key aspect on Evangelical and proto-Zionist discourse. Yet Macleod's words also implicitly seem to invite European order, exported around the world in colonial and settler colonial enterprises, to tame the 'wild', 'rough', 'tangled' environment.

This was said more explicitly by the traveller-writer who got to know Nablus the best, the Welsh missionary John Mills, who lived among the Samaritans in Nablus for three months in 1855, and penned several works on Palestine in both English and Welsh. Several years prior to his *Three Months' Residence at Nablus*, Mills had already published arguments for a colony of settlers from Wales to be founded in

[71] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine.*, pp. 233-234, 235
[72] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 183
[73] Mary Eliza Rogers, "Samaria and Plain of Esdraelon" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 2, 1-24, p. 1
[74] Oliphant, *Haifa,* p. 441
[75] George Robinson Lees, *Village Life in Palestine: A Description of the Religion, Home Life, Manners, Customs, Characteristics and Superstitions of the Peasants of the Holy Land, With Reference to the Bible* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911 [1897]), pp. 21-22
[76] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 232

Palestine.[77] While Mills noted that around Nablus were 'gardens and orchards, luxuriant with vegetation', he complained that the area was 'destitute on the one hand of all traces of science, art, and taste, but abounding on the other with rubbish and filth of all kinds'. 'Compared', Mills argued, 'with Palestine in general, the valley of Nablus is a beautiful garden; but with similar localities in our own country it will not bear a moment's comparison'. Mills then pondered the role that European colonialism might play in Nablus: 'with European industry, and art, and taste, I do believe that it could be made one of the most charming spots upon the face of the globe'.[78] As with descriptions of other parts of Palestine as highly fertile, Mills' description of the environs of Nablus, more explicitly than most, sought to portray the country as a tempting bounty for a European empire or settler colonial movement.

Traveller-writers also provided descriptions of the urban environment in Nablus. By contrast with Jerusalem, travellers had little interest in specific sites within the city, perhaps because they believed that, in the words of Mary Eliza Rogers, there were 'no very ancient [i.e. older than the Islamic conquest] buildings in Nablus'.[79] Traveller-writers instead focused their descriptions on the city's residential quarters and bazaars (fig. 10.5). While their representations sometimes lapsed into Orientalist cliché, some travellers proved more perceptive of the socio-economic conditions in Nablus which contributed to its prosperity. Their accounts captured some of the process of change in Palestine, whilst the same writers may have portrayed the land as a whole as stuck in the Biblical past.

[77] Jasmine Donahaye, *Whose People? Wales, Israel, Palestine* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), pp. 55-58
[78] John Mills, *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans* (London: John Murray, 1864), pp. 26-27
[79] Rogers "Samaria and Plain of Esdraelon", p. 10. This was incorrect: the Great Mosque's structure is in fact of Byzantine origin.

**Figure 10.5:**
**"In a Bazaar" (Nablus),**
***"Those Holy Fields."* by Samuel Manning,**
**page 158**

Not all travellers were admirers of Nablus, some venting their dislike of the city's Arab architecture and urban planning. Mills, for instance, complained of its 'uncommonly sombre and dull' streets, which he claimed were 'only passages between dead walls, excepting where the bazaars break the monotony'.[80] In *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan*, Porter similarly wrote that, while 'Nabulus is prosperous and improving', on the other hand 'its streets, with a few exceptions, are still narrow,

[80] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. 88

gloomy and torturous'.[81] Goodrich-Freer vividly described the city's 'heaps of decaying vegetable matter and […] roofed passages, dark as a cellar, and where only in the middle could one walk upright', and the Samaritan quarter which was 'decidedly cleaner and more airy' but where her group was mobbed by locals 'clamorous for backsheesh', 'would-be vendors of antiques', and even 'the very school children bringing torn pages from their copy-books for sale to the Frenjy [Westerners] who were known, by experience, to be ready to buy, irrespective of the value of the articles of commerce'.[82]

The accounts of other travellers put Nablus in a different light. Tristram wrote that Nablus was 'by far the best town we had seen since we left Beyrout', with houses 'as a rule, superior to those of Jerusalem', and cleaner streets with water flowing in channels.[83] Isabel Burton wrote in *The Inner Life of Syria* that Nablus was 'a very pretty and prosperous-looking town, with good stone houses and Egyptian-looking windows'.[84] Copping concurred that 'the eye was pleased by colour effects and by noble buildings and some beautiful old archways'.[85]

Other travellers noted the impact which trade, not only local but also connected with global networks of trade, was having on the city. 'Among the low Oriental domes and the tall palms which here and there wave over the courtyards of Nablous', noted Tristram in 1865, 'rises a large modern structure of yesterday — neither more nor less than a cotton-mill!' As the traveller approached the building, Tristram noted, 'The busy hum of the cotton-gins greeted us on all sides, and heaps of cotton-husks lay about the streets'. The cause of the expansion of cotton-growing in Palestine centred on Nablus, Tristram explained, was the detrimental impact of the American Civil War on the United States' own cotton industry.[86] In Biblical Orientalist fashion, Tristram felt uncomfortable when confronted with this evidence of industrial modernity developing in the Holy Land, writing that 'the cotton-factory in Shechem was as grotesque in appearance as in idea'; yet it also led him to write approvingly of Nablus's inhabitants that the city was 'one of the few towns where the Moslems seem not indifferent to

[81] Josias Leslie Porter, *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan: Scenes of the Early Life and Labours of OUR LORD* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1889), p. 30
[82] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 196
[83] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 139
[84] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 2, p. 204
[85] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, p. 201
[86] Palestinian cotton had been a lucrative export to Europe from the seventeenth century. See Mahmoud Yazbak, "The Politics of Trade and Power: Dahir al-ʿUmar and the Making of Early Modern Palestine", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 56, No. 4/5 (2013), 696-736

trade, and the only one in the country, so far as I know, where the commerce is in their sole hands'.[87]

Nablus was also known to travellers for its olive oil production, and the related industry of soap production. Manning wrote approvingly that 'Considerable quantities of soap are made, and one large factory has quite a European look', adding that 'the oil produced here is the best in Palestine'. His attention was also caught by the bazaars, which he found 'crowded with bedouin from beyond the Jordan, with the peasantry of the valley, and with Russian, Armenian and Greek pilgrims who, having landed at Haifa, are on their way to Jerusalem'. This contrasted starkly with the Biblical Orientalist view of Palestine as devoid of populace and social life, though Manning could not resist drawing the Orientalist's contrast between the "civilised" transactions of Western commerce and the activity at the market in Nablus, with customers and shopkeepers 'shrieking and yelling at one another in their guttural Arabic till manslaughter seems imminent'.[88] Mary Rogers wrote somewhat more perceptively of the soap manufacture, noting there were some twenty factories, and also of the bazaars, showing further how Palestine was becoming a part of the world economy with 'Manchester cottons, printed calicoes, Sheffield cutlery, Bohemian glasses for narghilehs, and crockery and trinkets of all kinds from Marseilles' all for sale in the markets of Nablus. Rogers also commented on the new construction and increasing European presence in the city in the latter nineteenth century, with 'a new khan, a military arsenal, a Latin monastery, increased accommodation for the Protestant mission, and several large new dwelling-houses, showing signs of local prosperity and progress'.[89] Even Oliphant wrote of Nablus that 'for a Moslem city, it may be considered an enterprising and go-ahead place'.[90]

In their representation of the social relations embedded in the urban fabric of Nablus, traveller-writers produced a picture somewhat in line with the academic scholarship on Palestine in the late Ottoman period by the likes of Alexander Scholch, Beshara Doumani and Mahmoud Yazbak: a Palestine moving towards closer integration with world markets, under strong impetus from local Palestinians.[91] Nablus

[87] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 140
[88] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 159
[89] Rogers, "Samaria and Plain of Esdraelon", pp. 10, 11, 13
[90] Oliphant, *Haifa*, p. 442
[91] See Alexander Scholch, *Palestine in Transformation, 1856-1882: Studies in Social, Economic and Political Development* (Berkeley: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1993); Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*; Yazbak, "The Politics of Trade and Power"

was almost the only locale in Palestine where travellers recognised this was taking place. Ultimately, Nablus's location close to Jerusalem, and the fertility and industry around the city, made it a tempting prize for colonisation. In an article from 1879 in which he explicitly discussed a British takeover of Palestine, Conder argued that the connection of Nablus with a railway was 'a matter of special importance', for Nablus 'will prove in all probability the true capital of Palestine'.[92]

## II.II: 'The Very Furnace of Mahometan Bigotry': Representing the People of Nablus

The other major trope after the fertility of the Nablus region, coexisting alongside depictions of Nablus's enterprising spirit, was the supposed religious fanaticism and hostility of the Muslims of Nablus. David Kushner has pointed out that Western travellers 'often single[d] out Nablus and Hebron' as being 'zealous towns'.[93] They were both large towns or cities with majority Muslim populations; unlike most other cities in Palestine which held an interest for Western travellers, such as Christian-majority Bethlehem and Nazareth, Tiberias with its significant Jewish community, and Jerusalem with its multi-faith population, Islam was dominant in Nablus and Hebron. Furthermore, unlike many Palestinian towns frequented by visitors, there were fewer European institutions such as churches, missionary schools and consular buildings (although these did exist in Nablus), giving the cities a more undiluted Palestinian and Muslim character than travellers were used to.[94]

What travellers interpreted as the 'fanaticism' of the inhabitants of these locales reveals more about the travellers' own culture shock when entering a non-Western, Muslim space, than evidencing the supposed hostility of the indigenous residents. In their representations of the population of Nablus, travellers often expressed their negative opinions of Islam. Asserting the Islamic fanaticism of Nablus somewhat contradicted Orientalist logic given the noted prosperity and entrepreneurialism, since Islam was supposed to be a fatalistic religion which hindered all progress. Yet the travelogues continually featured such generic descriptions of the Nablus Muslims as

[92] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Haven of Carmel", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 125, No. 759 (January 1879), 35-42, p. 37
[93] Kushner, "Zealous Towns in Nineteenth-Century Palestine", p. 597
[94] Mahmoud Yazbak, "Nabulsi Ulama in the Late Ottoman Period, 1864-1914", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 1997), 71-91, p. 72

particularly bigoted. This demonstrated intertextuality between Palestine travelogues, with not only sentiments but even the very words frequently repeated by different authors.

Again, Kinglake set the tone. He averred that 'Nablus is the very furnace of Mahometan bigotry' and claimed that only the Egyptian occupation which ended in 1840 had made the streets of Nablus safe for Christians and Europeans. Nevertheless, Kinglake still claimed that 'every man suspended his employment, and gazed on me with a fixed, glassy look, which seemed to say, "God is good, but how marvellous and inscrutable are His ways that thus he permits this white-faced dog of a Christian to hunt through the paths of the faithful"'.[95] In *Notices of the Modern Samaritans* by Ya'qub al-Shalabi and Edward Thomas Rogers, the authors described the Muslim populace as 'Mohammedans of a very fierce and fanatical disposition'; a sizeable chunk of the short work was dedicated to reporting the injustices inflicted on the Samaritans by the Muslim populace and governors of Nablus.[96] Mary Rogers also reported Edward, her brother, warning her in almost the same words of Nablus's 'Moslems of the most fierce and fanatical class'.[97]

John Mills provided more details of 'the most fanatic and wicked of all the Mussulmans of Palestine' (he also took a low view of Nablus's Christians, writing of the 'general ignorance and superstition' of the Orthodox, and the 'very inferior quality' even of the Protestants). Mills recounted that when he attempted to enter the Great Mosque of Nablus 'with the intention of viewing' the building, he 'was soon surrounded by a clamorous and insolent rabble, who were ready to teach better manners to the Christian dog'. He concluded that 'Nablus is not the safest place for a Frank to remain in'.[98] Other traveller-writers also reported unpleasant experiences in Nablus. Tristram, claiming that 'bigotry and fanaticism are considered to be more strongly marked in the inhabitants of this district than in any other', added that 'many travellers have complained of the insults, and even violence' they experienced in Nablus.[99] Kelman

[95] Kinglake, *Eothen*, pp. 360-361
[96] Jacob esh Shelaby and Edward Thomas Rogers, *Notices of the Modern Samaritans, Illustrated by Incidents in the Life of Jacob esh Shelaby, Gathered from Him, and Translated by Mr. E.T. Rogers* (London: Samson Low and Son, 1855), p.13
[97] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p. 215
[98] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 92, 95, 100, 103, 275. John Wilson mentioned that he and a companion were 'permitted to go in [the mosque] for a few minutes', after the promise of *bakshish*, on his visit to Palestine in the 1840s. John Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible Visited and Discussed in an Extensive Journey Undertaken with Special Reference to the Promotion of Biblical Research and the Advancement of the Cause of Philanthropy* (London: William White and Co., 1847), Volume 2, pp. 62, 299-300
[99] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 140-141

warned that travellers in Nablus and Hebron 'will probably be stoned with more or less effect according to the courage and the marksmanship of the thrower', adding that some travellers dared to throw the stones back, 'which seems to indicate a lack of refined piety on their part'.[100] Copping, whose admiration for Nablus's architecture did not extend to its people, wrote that several residents of the city 'spat at us; which is so pitiable a thing to do, and argues a mind so lacking in intelligence and culture, that Nablus is a city I take no pleasure in remembering'.[101]

In Biblical Orientalist fashion, several of the travellers drew comparisons between the contemporary inhabitants of Nablus and its ancient residents, who featured in the Bible as pugnacious and turbulent. Mills wrote that Nablus's 'inhabitants have always been domineering and insulting, from the time of the Ephraimites, through the Samaritan period, down to the present Mussulman bigots'.[102] Finn wrote similarly that the more he became acquainted with the people of Nablus, 'a brutish people "waxing fat and kicking," the more does the history of the book of Judges […] read like a record of modern occurrences thereabouts'.[103] He contemplated that the existing inhabitants of Nablus might be descended from the ancient Shechemites and had inherited their violent tendencies, claiming that the residents of Nablus were 'evidently of a different race from that of other parts of Palestine', and were 'distinguishable by a mean and cruel cast of countenance'.[104] Manning agreed, writing that 'as though inheriting the fanatical hostility of their ancestors, the present Moslem population of Nablus, are amongst the most bigoted and violent in the whole East'.[105]

Not all travellers took the same view of the people of Nablus, although compliments were often mixed with slights. Mills had to acknowledge that whilst 'even in their highest officials, with one or two exceptions, you miss that grace which characterizes the better class of Mussulmans elsewhere', he had 'met with much politeness from some of their leading men'.[106] Isabel Burton, whilst claiming that 'the people in this part of the world are boorish and stupid', continued that she found the inhabitants of Nablus 'extremely civil. They were not fanatical, but showed us everything with much pleasure, and stood up and saluted us as we passed'.[107] Yet

[100] Kelman and Fulleylove, *Holy Land*, p. 165
[101] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, p. 201
[102] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. 71
[103] Finn, *Byeways*, p. 92
[104] Finn, *Stirring Times,* vol. 2, p. 237
[105] Manning, *"Those Holy Fields."*, p. 145
[106] Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, p. 95
[107] Burton, *Inner Life of* Syria, vol. 2, pp. 203, 205

these instances of faint praise were scattered thinly amongst the negative representations of the Muslims of Nablus.

One fascinating and tragic incident, referred to in the works of a number of traveller-writers, provides an insight into the underlying reasons for Westerners' antipathy towards the populace of Nablus. This was the events of April 1856, which were retold in Rogers' *Domestic Life in Palestine*, Mills' *Three Months' Residence*, and in Finn's *Stirring Times*, and were reported in a significant number of British newspapers at the time.[108] The events unfolded after the birth of the son of the French Emperor Napoleon III, which occurred on March 16th 1856, with the news reaching the expatriate European community in Jerusalem at the end of the month. Finn reported that the Protestant Bishop Gobat, visiting Nablus, installed a church bell over the Anglican missionary school, relying on the liberalising measures of the *Hatt-i Humayun* (Ottoman Turkish: imperial edict) proclamation of 1856, part of the *Tanzimat* reforms implemented from 1839 to 1876 extracted by European powers from the Ottomans. This enflamed tensions between Muslims and Europeans and, unfortunately, indigenous Christians, further exacerbated by the raising of the French and Ottoman flags over the house of the French consular agent. Finn claimed that 'among the fanatic Nabloosians, a hostile feeling was seething, and waiting only for an opportunity of overt explosion'.

On April 4th, catastrophe occurred when a British Anglican missionary Samuel Lyde (1825-1860) shot and killed a local man, named in some newspapers (but by none of the travellers) as Yasma, outside Nablus.[109] All the British chroniclers of the event, none of whom were present, insisted that this was accidental, Finn claiming that the man had grabbed Lyde's coat after which the gun was discharged, and Mills claiming that the man had attempted to lay hold of the gun. According to Rogers, the man was 'deaf and dumb, and slightly deranged in intellect, and consequently was superstitiously respected by the Arabs, and was yet, at the same time, an object of their amusement. He was a professed beggar, and very importunate'. Little sympathy for the victim was shown in the travelogues, whilst on the other hand Lyde was

[108] Information on these events and the quotations come from Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 293-296; Mills, *Three Months' Residence*, pp. 101-102; Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 419-439. For a full account and analysis of the event, see Gabriel Polley, "'Down with the Bell!' The Nāblus Uprising of April 1856', *Romance, Revolution and Reform: The Journal of the Southampton Centre for Nineteenth Century Research*, Vol. 2, *Resistance in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2020), 12-35

[109] Anonymous, "The Outrages at Nablous", *The Daily News* (5 May 1856)

described by Finn as a 'poor man […] in great grief at the result of the accident, [needing] all the cheering and kindness which friends could bestow'.

Finn reported that a crowd, enflamed by Nablus's Islamic clergy, quickly gathered: 'Shrieks and cries arose from the infuriated crowd – "Vengeance on the Christians for the blood of Islâm!" – "Down with the flags!" – "Down with the bell!"' Lyde was taken to the house of the governor of Nablus, defended by Ottoman soldiers, for his own safety. Finn and Rogers claimed that he had offered to give himself up to appease the crowd, but this was denied by the governor. The crowd 'went away to wreak their vengeance on the unoffending inhabitants of the Christian quarter'. Finn provided a sensationalised picture of what next transpired:

> The bell and the flags, including the Turkish, were soon on the ground – the tricolor of France, subjected to special indignity, having an old shoe tied to it before being dragged through the miry street, by way of expressing the popular hatred.
>
> The French Agent's house, and the Protestant mission house and school, as well as the dwellings of Protestant natives, were sacked. The grey-headed father of the Prussian Agent, Kawwâr (the old man was not a Protestant), […] was murdered […].
>
> Not only were the houses of the Agents and of the Protestant Christian natives sacked, but the others, the Greek-rite Christians, were likewise plundered in their houses and in their church, and the dwelling of the deacon in charge of it.
>
> The movement was from first to last anti-Christian, for which the incidents above described were but the pretext.
>
> The ringleaders were one Shaikh Salâhh and his sons. Neither Jew nor Samaritan was either insulted or injured.

The indigenous Christian community was caught between the Muslim demonstrators and the European presence. Ultimately, Lyde was taken to Jerusalem and brought to trial, with the family of the dead man after several years paid 55,000 piasters in compensation (perhaps, strangely enough, by the Ottoman governor of Beirut to whom the case was assigned, on the proviso that Lyde leave the Eastern Mediterranean region and never return).[110] Finn, however, complained that in spite of his efforts he

[110] Various, *Despatches from Her Majesty's Consuls in the Levant, Respecting Past or Apprehended Disturbances in Syria: 1858 to 1860* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1860), pp. 17-18

had failed to receive any redress for the damage done to the British consular and missionary property, and also that 'to this day neither the seditious rioters nor the actual perpetrators of the violence of the 4th April, 1856, have met with any chastisement'. Revealed in Finn's consular diary, Lyde himself seems to have suffered a mental breakdown, possibly owning to his guilt over the event.[111]

The reasons for the uprising were complex, involving anger over Yasma's death, unease at the growing European presence in the region, discontent with the Western-dictated *Tanzimat* reforms and the local identity of a town which had a strong local identity and tradition of autonomy equating to virtual self-rule. However, travellers represented the incident in a way that demonised virtually all Muslims, but particularly those of Nablus, as fanatically anti-Christian and opposed to modernity and reform. The uprising was, perhaps, especially worrying to travellers as it seemed to threaten the interests which the European powers had been building intensively in the region. It was also worrying that popular anger was directed too against the Ottoman flag, for the events in Nablus showed that Palestinians were becoming resentful of their rulers' closeness to Western powers.

The fear of such events in Nablus lingered for decades; Boddy recorded hearing over four decades later 'a startling but inaccurate story of a massacre of our Missionary staff at Nablûs'.[112] Nablus's strong sense of independence and its Islamic identity might, one day, prove a threat to any colonising force. While the city captured the imaginations of travellers with its Biblical heritage, and boasted economic potential in cotton and olive oil production, the inhabitants of the city stood in the way of whatever colonising plans the West might have for Palestine. Travellers' awareness of this formed part of the root of their representations of the city and its people.

[111] Arnold Blumberg (ed.), *A View from Jerusalem, 1849-1858: The Consular Diary of James and Elizabeth Anne Finn* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1980), pp. 251, 254
[112] Boddy, *Days in Galilee*, p. 278

### III: 'Modern Life in Palestine': Representing Haifa

**Figure 10.6:**
**"View of Haifa from the Base of Mount Carmel",**
***"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* by Josias Leslie Porter,**
**page 215**

Haifa, on Palestine's northern Mediterranean coast (fig. 10.6), was experienced differently by Western travellers to most of Palestine's other towns. While traveller-writers were aware of the ancient settlements and Biblical connotations around Mount Carmel, the Haifa they encountered in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was essentially a modern town with no holy associations, and few historical memories compared to the Crusader ghosts which haunted nearby 'Akka. Tristram claimed contemptuously that 'not a vestige of antiquity' could be found in Haifa, whilst Elizabeth Charles admitted, Haifa was 'more like a town than any place we had entered since leaving Jerusalem; but not one Bible association detained us among its narrow streets,

and, after a short delay, we commenced the ascent to the promontory of Carmel'.[113] In the flipside of the way sites judged physically insignificant in the present, such as Beitin/Bethel, attracted travellers' attentions because of their ancient connotations, the growing town of Haifa was passed over because of its lack of Biblical interest.

Yet Haifa became more interesting to travellers as time progressed, for it was undergoing changes deeply interconnected with Europe's growing ambitions in Palestine. These changes had their roots, nevertheless, in the decision of Dahir al-'Umar to relocate the existing hamlet of Haifa several miles southward to a point better suited for a port in 1764-5.[114] Dahir's role was noted by Porter, who described him, in language at odds with the common claim of Palestinians being incapable of nationalism or patriotism, as 'a patriotic Arab chief'.[115] In the late Ottoman period, the opportunities provided by Haifa, linked to the Hijaz Railway in 1905, attracted many new residents, including European communities, local indigenous Palestinians, and Zionist settlers, expanding the population from 2000 in the mid-nineteenth century, to 10,000 by 1910, and 20,000 by 1914.[116] Most notable amongst the European arrivals were the German Templars, who founded their colony, the first successful one of seven across Palestine, close to the town in 1868. They received much attention from British traveller-writers, as discussed below and in the next chapter; yet travellers were not imperceptive of the developments taking place within the Arab part of Haifa, which challenged Orientalist conceptions of an unchanging Palestine.

### III.I: 'A Marvellous Transformation': Representing Arab Haifa, and Plans for Colonisation

Not only was Haifa not yet part of most travellers' itineraries in the 1840s, but it was possible for travellers who passed close by to miss the village entirely. For example, William Henry Bartlett sailed down the coast to Jaffa and saw 'the hills of Nazareth and Zafed [Safad], the long range of Mount Carmel dropping into the sea, and a wide extent of plain', but aside from 'the white walls of St. John of Acre' (the Crusades-era

[113] Tristram, *Land of the Bible*, p. 96; Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 253
[114] Yazbak, "The Politics of Trade and Power"
[115] Porter, *"Through Samaria"*, p. 216
[116] May Seikaly, "Haifa at the Crossroads: An Outpost of the New World Order" in Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C.A. Bayly (eds.), *Modernity and Culture from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 96-111, p. 98

term for 'Akka), Bartlett believed it all to be 'a beautiful, but lifeless expanse'.[117] Warburton described standing on Mount Carmel and seeing only 'an immense expanse of ocean, unenlivened by a single sail; wide tracts of land, unchequered by a village; and, at the base of the mountain, a few half-bald corn-fields, and some olive and sycamore trees'.[118] Twenty-five years later, on the cusp of the arrival of the German settlers, John Macgregor dismissed Haifa in his 1869 *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* as 'a mere tossing roadstead'.[119]

Yet some did visit and describe Haifa, before the German colony made it a point of interest for larger numbers of travellers. John Wilson described with a minimal amount of detail the village in the shape of 'an imperfect oblong', with its walls and towers (built by Dahir) Wilson judged 'of no great strength'. He remarked on the European presence in the city, English, French, Russian and Austrian consular agents already resident. In line with his proto-Zionist interest in the Jews in Palestine, Wilson provided much more detail on the Jews he found in Haifa, whom he reported numbering 40 to 50 individuals, mainly of Moroccan origin. They did not appreciate Wilson's attempts to discuss religious matters, for he reported that 'they showed great backwardness to meet our views in this respect, more so, indeed, than any Jews with whom we had elsewhere met in any part of the world', and claimed several left the room when he mentioned Christ.[120]

Other travellers left more detailed accounts of their experiences in Haifa. Mary Rogers stayed in the town for several weeks in September and October 1855, informed by a Palestinian neighbour that she was the first Western woman to stay there overnight, and gave a not unsympathetic portrait of the town. She paid visits to members of the Muslim and Christian communities, commented on their daily lives, and represented them as curious but mainly friendly. She attended an Orthodox wedding and noted the cosmetic treatments applied to the bride by a widowed woman, who was 'in sad disgrace with the clergy of Haifa, for encouraging all this vanity'. She provided a picture of the social life in the town, on the evening on which the Ottoman and European victory against the Russian Empire at Sebastopol (during the 1853-1856 Crimean War) was announced; in one of 'the open *cafés* and barbers' shops,

[117] Bartlett, *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem*, p. 5
[118] Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, p. 217
[119] John Macgregor, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan: A Canoe Cruise in Palestine, Egypt, and the Waters of Damascus* (London: John Murray, 1904 [1869]), p. 85
[120] Wilson, *The Lands of the Bible* vol. 2, pp. 238-239

[where] story-tellers and singers attracted earnest listeners', Rogers' brother translated and adapted 'to Arab comprehension' the plot of *Jane Eyre* for his audience. As a woman, Rogers had somewhat privileged access to domestic spaces, such as the apartments of the wives of Haifa's city notables. Her portrait of life in Haifa was probably the most insightful and sympathetic of all traveller-writers' representation of urban society in Palestine. Not everything in Haifa was so bucolic, however; Rogers reported that once '300 to 400 of the peasantry' from the nearby village of al-Tireh came to attack the town, and only the arrival of Ottoman troops, according to her account 'especially to protect the English vice-consulate', saved Haifa from the raid.

Rogers also commented on Haifa's architecture. She contrasted the houses 'occupied by consuls and merchants […] large, substantial buildings of hewn stone, with central courts and broad terraces', with the 'poorer class of houses […] of earth and rough stone'. Whilst Rogers appreciated the 'fine fruit gardens, where the pomegranates and figs especially flourish', she also complained that 'within the town, wherever there was space, flocks and herds were lying down, crowded together', and of the 'narrow, tortuous, dirty, channeled streets', and 'muddy pools […] and heaps of vegetable refuse' which could be found in them, a hint of the Oriental chaos and dirt which characterised travellers' representation of other Palestinian towns.[121] More stridently, Tristram claimed that 'we had seen a few miserable places in Syria, but the filth and squalor of the streets, or rather gutters of Caiffa, outdid all the collections of sewerage through which we had ever had to wade, always excepting Tyre'.[122]

The establishment of the German colony considerably increased the number of Western visitors to the proximity of Haifa, not least because the German settlers ran a hotel, one of the first in Palestine alongside a handful in Jaffa and a few more in Jerusalem.[123] It was not only the German colony which caught the interest of later travellers, however; they also noted the prosperity that the Arab part of Haifa was enjoying, the changes the town was undergoing, and the potential for further development. Conder astutely noted 'the thriving town of Haifa […] which bids fair to be a place of much importance should the prosperity of Palestine ever become greater'.[124]

[121] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 83-109
[122] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 95
[123] See Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, p. 40
[124] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 95

Conder's description of Haifa in *Tent Work* was brief, but he expanded on it in an 1879 article for *Blackwood's Magazine*. Conder praised the scenery of Carmel, and commented briefly on the 'town of 4000 inhabitants squeezed in between four brown walls a century old, and presenting the usual picturesque and half-ruinous appearance of Levantine towns'. What clearly excited him the most were the opportunities which Haifa offered in the event of Palestine's future occupation by Britain. Conder argued that while 'Napoleon called Acre "the key of Syria"', this dictum was more appropriate to Haifa, which not only possessed 'a sheltered harbour, but […] forms a natural landing-place, whence roads lead in every direction', facilitating trade and communications around the Levant. Regarding military strategy, Haifa formed 'a base of operations in a position in immediate communication with the sea, and which must be attacked in front, as it could neither be outflanked nor masked'. Conder predicted that Jewish immigration to Palestine would soon become an important factor. Should 'the Jews […] become the owners of the country', Conder thought, 'the town of Haifa would certainly rise to a position of importance as the only good port within the limits of the Holy Land'. He claimed, without providing substantiation, that Haifa had always been 'a favourite abode of the Jews', and that the town's trade was already 'principally in the hands of the Jewish inhabitants', whom he generously estimated numbered 1000 individuals.[125] Conder's laudation of Haifa's military-strategic location, and claims of its importance for Jewish settlement, closely anticipated later Zionist and British policies during the Mandate. Desiring Haifa's total 'Judaization', in the 1930s the Zionist leadership lobbied British officials to remove the increasing number of Palestinian workers arriving in the city and resettle them elsewhere, while Britain harboured hopes that it would be able to maintain some form of sovereignty over the port after the termination of the Mandate, still viewing Haifa as the region's 'key'.[126]

A quarter-century after her first visit to Haifa, Mary Rogers recorded the changes which had occurred in a town 'rapidly rising in importance', including the construction of houses outside the old walls where previously 'there were no suburban dwellings except the huts of the gardeners', and the growth in population from 2000 residents to an estimated 5000, with a Christian majority and 'a considerable number of Jews' as well as Muslims. Rogers also noted the cultivation of 'about six hundred

[125] Conder, "The Haven of Carmel". The Ottoman census of 1871-2 reported eight Jewish households in Haifa out of a total of 460 households. Scholch, "The Demographic Development of Palestine", p. 486
[126] Tamir Goren, "Efforts to Establish an Arab Workers' Neighbourhood in British Mandatory Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (November 2006), 917-933

acres of good arable land' north-west of Haifa, which she assigned half to the German colonists and half to the Arabs of Haifa, and the growth of olive trees, figs and prickly pears. As with Nablus, the fertility of the land in this part of Palestine and the successful farming taking place there contributed to the judgement of Western visitors of the beauty of the scenery, and the potential of a colonising venture in the area.[127] Porter also provided his impressions of Haifa's development by the late 1880s, which he characterised as 'a marvellous transformation in a short time'. 'When I first visited Haifa, now many years ago', Porter recounted,

> it was dirty and poverty-stricken; its houses were falling to ruin; its inhabitants were oppressed by a rapacious government on the one hand, and by the nomads of Esdraelon and Sharon [i.e. the Bedouin] on the other. Now all is different. New life and activity appear everywhere; the bustle of eager business is seen on the streets, in the shops, and on the shore.

As for the thoroughfares which Tristram had previously found so wanting, Porter described the main street as 'well paved, and unusually clean, as indeed are most of the streets and lanes opening off it'. Porter described the houses as 'built of white stone from the quarries of Carmel, and some of them are large and imposing in appearance. The town, in fact, has a prosperous look'. Ultimately, Porter evaluated Haifa as 'one of the very few places in Palestine where we see evidence of enterprise and rapidly growing importance'.[128]

This transformation, which contradicted the deeply ingrained belief of Western travellers that the Orient in general, and Palestine in particular, were static locales mired in the past, Porter and many other travellers attributed to the trade and influence brought by the German Colony – it was still inconceivable to most that such developments might have a Palestinian rather than a Western origin. Yet Goodrich-Freer at least noted the existence of at least one very wealthy Palestinian in Haifa, when from Mount Carmel she viewed 'the estates of Selim Effendi Khuri – the millionaire of a district in which are many rich men, mainly Germans'. Goodrich-Freer reflected that 'Haifa, and all its gardens, offered, perhaps, the most smiling and prosperous picture which Palestine had ever shown us' with its 'detached houses, buried in trees' and 'unwonted completeness and order of the cultivation'. As traveller-

[127] Mary Eliza Rogers, "Mount Carmel and the River Kishon" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 3, 91-108, pp. 95, 96
[128] Porter, *"Through Samaria"*, pp. 216-217

writers had written earlier of Nablus, she asked 'where else can we find a prospect such as this?'[129]

The traveller-writer most closely associated with Haifa was Laurence Oliphant, who titled his second book on Palestine after the town: *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine*. Oliphant's time in Palestine, including his residence in the German colony of Haifa from late 1882 until his move to the nearby village Daliat al-Karmel in summer 1884, is discussed in the next chapter. On his first visit to Palestine, recounted in *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant described Haifa as 'a thriving, growing place', though provided little further description of the old town; it was the German colony that fired his imagination. Like Conder, and influenced by him (Oliphant cited Conder's article), Oliphant became enamoured of Haifa's location as a port, and it came to occupy an important place in his plan for a giant Jewish agricultural colony east of the Jordan which in turn would have a major influence on the outlook of the Zionist movement.

Oliphant became much better acquainted with Haifa in the 1880s. Though the articles in his *Haifa* covered a variety of locations in Palestine, it is significant that he chose the name of the town as the title of his book. The subtitle *Life in Modern Palestine* also demonstrates his attitude to Haifa. Whilst most traveller-writers viewed Palestine as stuck in Biblical time, incapable of modernity, Oliphant considered Haifa a place where modern life was possible, and where a European-style modernity was developing and might flower in the future. At the heart of this was Oliphant's one-time residence the German colony, but he did not neglect to represent Arab Haifa. 'Prior to the arrival of the colonists of the Temple Society', Oliphant claimed, 'Haifa was as dirty as most Arab villages. It is now well paved throughout. The houses, all constructed of white limestone, quarries of which abound in the immediate vicinity, give it a clean and substantial appearance, and contain a bustling and thriving population of about six thousand inhabitants'.

Oliphant also commented on the sight of camels led by 'wild-looking Arabs' bringing sacks of grain to the town westwards from the Hauran, another area which Oliphant had fantasised as a colony site, since 'Haifa is gradually becoming one of the great grain-exporting ports of the country, and one or two steamers are generally to be seen loading in the harbour'. Oliphant contrasted the nearby 'Akka, where he described the population as 'for the most part fanatic Moslems, which means a state

[129] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, p. 252

of stagnation in industry and commercial pursuits', and Haifa, where the population was 'increasing with great rapidity, and the place seems to resound from one end to the other with the clink of the stone-mason's chisel, as new houses spring up in all directions'. Oliphant noted that a road was being built linking Haifa and Beirut, and hoped that a railway, like that included his colonisation plan, connecting Haifa and Damascus, would soon be constructed; Oliphant's conceptualisation of rail's value for colonisation is discussed below.

Not all was rosy in Oliphant's Haifa, however. Sensitive to the involvement of foreign powers in the Eastern Question, Oliphant warned of the influence of the French Consul over the large number of Greek and Roman Catholics in Haifa, which he accused of 'constantly giving rise to awkward questions and complications not devoid of danger', and also complained of the role of the monastery on Mount Carmel, which owned 'a great part of the house property in the town of Haifa', and which he accused of preventing further construction near the mountain.[130] Palestinian Christians and Christian institutions as a source of nuisance or threat was a well-established discourse in the travelogues, as discussed above in Chapter Five.

Not all traveller-writers took such an interest in Haifa, even those who visited when the growth of Haifa into one of Palestine's most important cities was well underway. Copping, who arrived into Palestine through Haifa's by then well-developed port for a tour with Thomas Cook, expressed his distaste for the town, which he said 'had a grimly primitive look. The influence of recent centuries was missing. One could see, even in the twilight, that its inhabitants still lived in the Middle Ages'. Failing to notice the European influence which had been increasing for decades, he felt out of place in 'a town so foreign as Haifa'.[131] There was indeed one part of Haifa which was totally foreign to Palestine, though familiar to the Western travellers who visited it: the German colony.

[130] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 208-209, 212. Seikaly confirms the high degree of French influence in the period, particularly through Francophone educational institutions. Seikaly, "Haifa at the Crossroads", p. 101
[131] Copping, *Journalist in the Holy Land*, pp. 55, 64

## III.II: 'Transported into the Heart of Europe': Representing the Haifa German Colony

Of the seven German colonies in Palestine, the first at Haifa attracted the most attention from Western visitors. As noted above, British traveller-writers were quick to ascribe the progress they noted in Arab Haifa mainly or even solely to the presence of the German colony nearby. This was regardless of the doubts which travellers had regarding the ideology and the practices of the German Templars in Palestine, as elaborated in Chapter Eleven. Travellers widely viewed the German colonists as the lever of progress in Haifa, presaging much Israeli scholarship which from the 1970s onwards gave much attention to the movement, viewing the activities of the Templars as giving a modernising boost to Palestine, especially with their introduction of new agricultural technology, and therefore preparing the ground, literally and metaphorically, for the Zionist movement.[132] The German-Israeli historian Alex Carmel provided this viewpoint in his study *Ottoman Haifa*.[133] This scholarship draws deeply from the discourse propagated by Western travellers, on the travelogues of whom it has partly relied.

In their descriptions of the Haifa German colony, travellers extolled the north-west European values of order, tidiness, and town planning, implicitly or explicitly juxtaposed with the lack, to European eyes, of such observable order in Palestinian towns and villages, and the untamed rural landscape. Oliphant first impressions of his future home were that 'every where [sic] the sigils of thrift and industry were apparent. The village consists of two streets, of well-built stone houses, each standing separately in its own garden, the streets lined with young trees; and the most scrupulous tidiness was everywhere apparent'.[134] Oliphant's description of the colony as a 'village' was an attempt to naturalise what was an alien implantation in the Palestinian landscape, but it also reflected the fact that, to British travellers, the German colonies in Haifa and elsewhere were what villages *should be*, worthy of the designation with their order, genteelness and familiarity. Later he was to describe the colony as 'an oasis of civilization in the wilderness of Oriental barbarism' where Western travellers 'will find

[132] See Haim Goren, "Israeli Scholars since 1970 and the Study of the European Presence in Palestine in the Nineteenth Century (until World War I): State of the Art" in Barbara Haider-Wilson and Dominique Trimbur (eds.), *Europa und Palästina 1799–1948/Europe and Palestine 1799–1948: Religion – Politik – Gesellschaft/Religion – Politics – Society* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2010), 55-73
[133] Alex Carmel, *Ottoman Haifa: A History of Four Centuries under Turkish Rule* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010)
[134] Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, pp. 332-333

good accommodation, and all the necessaries, if not the luxuries, of civilized life'. Oliphant tellingly commented that on entering the colony, the visitor found themselves 'apparently transported into the heart of Europe', a stamp of approval of the Haifa colony according to the settler colonial ideal of creating a society for all intents and purposes European in a non-European land.[135]

Mary Rogers listed the public buildings of the colony in terms which would seem familiar and homely to her Western audience: 'a chapel and a college, where several languages, including Arabic, are taught', 'a library and reading-room', and 'an hotel of simple character, which is greatly praised by travellers for its cleanliness'. Perhaps to highlight the fact that, no matter how civilised it seemed, the colony was still a European outpost in the midst of Oriental barbarism, Rogers also mentioned 'a guardhouse for the use of the nightly patrol'.[136] Porter wrote appreciatively that the whole district around Haifa was 'now beginning to assume the outward aspect and order of a German province'.[137]

Travellers in the early twentieth century continued to praise the Germanic order they encountered in the colony. Rider Haggard commented on 'the pleasant-looking houses of the German colony', and asserted that 'their very box-like primness delights the eye full fed with Syrian squalor'.[138] Goodrich-Freer, who stayed in Arab Haifa where she found the streets 'though better than in many places, […] decidedly Oriental as to width, paving, and dirt', admitted that

> it was reposeful to find ourselves in the German colony – a picturesque European village: wide streets planted with trees, well-kept roads, gardens gay with flowers, and houses which seem to have been transported from some quaint, old country-town, each with its text in "black letter" over the door.

Goodrich-Freer noted that one of these houses, 'to some among us almost a place of pilgrimage', had been inhabited by Oliphant, 'a man of genius unappreciated, misunderstood', and reflected ironically that it was 'not England, and not America, [which] carry on his work of – literally – sweetness and light, but the Germans' –

[135] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 22, 23
[136] Rogers, "Mount Carmel and the River Kishon", pp. 96-97
[137] Porter, *"Through Samaria"*, p. 216
[138] Rider Haggard, *Winter Pilgrimage*, p. 204

'sweetness and light', presumably, being the settler-colonial implantation of European societies into Palestine.[139]

What attracted these traveller-writers to the Haifa German colony was that it proved that the alien landscape of Palestine could be tamed, its hillsides divided into neat fields, gardens and vineyards, its pathways transformed into streets lined by European-style houses. In this, the German colony provided a model for Palestine's colonisation, whether by a European power or by settlers from Europe, such as the members of the Zionist movement. Traveller-writers highlighted the agricultural technology, industry, transportation, and all-round "civilising" influence brought by the German Templars to Haifa and its indigenous population. Oliphant claimed that

> The influence of three hundred industrious, simple, honest farmers and artificers has already made its mark upon the surrounding Arab population, who have adopted their improved methods of agriculture, and whose own industries have received a stimulus which bids fair to make Haifa one of the most prosperous towns on the coast.

Oliphant attributed to the impetus from the settlers the growth in the Arab population of Haifa, the boom in house building in the town, the tripling of the value of land, the increase in imports and exports channelled through the port, and increased security – The danger from 'the lawless inhabitants of Tireh' had apparently diminished. Oliphant also celebrated the transportation links established by the Templars, writing that 'the most remarkable innovation is the introduction of wheeled vehicles'. Representing the German settlers as the bringers of civilisation and modernity to the Palestinians, Oliphant claimed that 'fifteen years ago a cart had never been seen by the inhabitants of Haifa', but that by 1884 a regular service of carriages 'owned and driven by natives' ran between Haifa and 'Akka.[140] Oliphant also noted the trades and industries represented in the colony, mentioning an olive oil soap factory which exported its products to America.[141]

Porter was even more forthright in his claims of the settlers' good influence. Whilst Haifa 'within a comparatively brief period […] has risen from the position of a poor village to the dignity of a considerable town and sea-port', Porter emphasised that this was 'mainly due to a small colony of Germans, whose history is a romance'.

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[139] Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, pp. 247-248
[140] Mary Rogers also commented on the colonists' construction of a road for carriages from Haifa to Nazareth, and that 'there is a carriage-maker among them'. Rogers, "Mount Carmel and the River Kishon", p. 97
[141] Oliphant, *Haifa*, pp. 20, 21, 23-24

Porter, a Presbyterian missionary, emphasised what he saw as the religious aspect of the Templars' influence:

> The colonists are earnest Christians, and they commend their religion to the native people, not so much perhaps by direct teaching and proselytizing as by truthfulness, sterling honesty, thrift, and industry. Their influence is good; and the Arabs of all sects and classes find it to be to their advantage to follow the example set them by a successful community.[142]

Frederick Treves similarly praised the German colony as 'the most pleasant part of the town, being admirably laid out, and full of well-built houses with many a charming garden', and the impetus for Haifa's 'rapid and substantial advance, being now a nourishing seaport with 15,000 inhabitants, together with commerce of some magnitude'.[143]

There was virtually no limit to the colonists' beneficial influence on the environs of Haifa in the eyes of the British travellers to Palestine. The actual extent of their influence is uncertain; while the German colony undoubtedly had an important impact on Haifa and, as discussed above, Israeli historians have attributed much to the Templars, May Seikaly has asserted that they 'served more as a model than a direct influence'.[144] Yet the Haifa German colony and its inhabitants had a great appeal for traveller-writers from the West, for in their eyes the successes of the colony were a vindication of colonial ventures and a model for a future colonisation of Palestine on a more ambitious scale. In Porter's words, the German colony was 'a good example of what Palestine might become under a firm and beneficent government'.

These rosy depictions of the Templars were tempered by reports of the hostile relations between the settlers and the indigenous population. While Porter claimed that 'the German colonists are respected by the entire population within and outside the town', in other accounts there are hints of the tensions with the German settlers uncovered by Yazbak's research.[145] Mary Rogers reported that 'an Arab' was employed by the settlers to pasture their herds, but in general the colonists 'live peaceably with the people of the country, but apparently do not desire to fraternise

[142] Porter, *"Through Samaria"*, pp. 215-217
[143] Treves, *The Land That Is Desolate*, p. 164
[144] Seikaly, "Haifa at the Crossroads", p. 101
[145] Porter, *"Through Samaria"*, p. 217. See also Mahmoud Yazbak, "Templars as Proto-Zionists? The 'German Colony' in Late Ottoman Haifa", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Summer 1999), 40-54

with them'.[146] Conder mentioned more serious 'feuds with the natives'.[147] While he and other travellers conjectured on the prospects a future European colonisation of Palestine held for the employment of a significant portion of the indigenous population, in essence the colonies were of a 'pure' settler colonial type, as were Zionist colonies particularly after the Second *Aliyah*, paving the way for the logic of elimination of the native.[148] What traveller-writers admired most about the Haifa German Colony was its creation of a European society – European in appearance, in agriculture and industry, and in its residents – in which traces of anything Palestinian were minimised until almost invisible.

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Palestinian cities were subjected to complex representation in the travelogues. Negative stereotypes about "Oriental" cities were widely held by travellers, and continued to be perpetuated throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Palestine in particular, traveller-writers often contrasted the open spaces of the countryside, with its Biblical connotations, with the urban environments which they portrayed as unfamiliar, unhygienic and unpleasant. Towns were loci of Muslim, non-Protestant Christian and Jewish identities, which confronted British travellers and often prompted them to express feelings of discomfort. Nevertheless, as the cases of Nablus and Haifa show, traveller-writers sometimes demonstrated greater insight into the processes of urban change which were affecting Palestine in the late Ottoman period. Behind the more positive representations of these towns, however, often lay travellers' concern for Palestine's colonisation, a determining factor explaining many of their discursive choices displayed in the travelogues. This thesis now turns directly to colonisation for its final chapter before the conclusion.

[146] Rogers, "Mount Carmel and the River Kishon", p. 98
[147] Conder, "The Haven of Carmel", p. 40
[148] See Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology: Internal and External Comparisons", *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (September 1993), 327-350

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# ‘To Occupy and Govern this Country’: British Travellers and Colonisation Projects

This chapter addresses what many travellers considered the future awaiting Palestine: its colonisation. Travellers’ attitudes and observations led many to believe that colonisation was a desirable and inevitable destiny for Palestine; as Edward Said notes, ‘once we begin to think of Orientalism as a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient, we will encounter few surprises’.[1] Reflecting both concerns over the Eastern Question and expectations of the “return” of the Jews, many British travellers expressed their hopes for Palestine’s future absorption into the British Empire, and/or its settlement by Jewish colonists. Some traveller-writers developed plans as to how settler colonisation might occur, included in their travelogues, or in articles or pamphlets dedicated to the topic. Some of these, as well as travellers’ more general reflections on colonisation, are analysed below.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first focuses on travellers’ writings on metropole colonialism, Palestine’s absorption into a European empire. The second investigates the representations of two settler-colonial enterprises in Palestine preceding Zionist colonisation, the European-American settlement near the village Artas, and the German Templar colonies. The third concentrates on a settler colonial project instigated near Jerusalem by James Finn, the Kerem Avraham agricultural colony, focusing on the textual presentation of the project in Finn’s memoir *Stirring Times*. Finally, the plan for a much more ambitious settler colonial endeavour which was never fulfilled, a large Jewish colony outlined in Laurence Oliphant’s travelogue *The Land of Gilead*, is examined. The influences of these latter two projects on the later practices of the Zionist movement and the State of Israel are considered, bringing the question of British travellers’ legacy in Palestine up to the present.

[1] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p.95

## I: 'England is Expected in the East': Imagining a British Palestine

Considerations of the Eastern Question, including which actions might prevent European powers gaining Ottoman territory at Britain's expense, were never far from travellers' minds in Palestine. Many travellers assumed that the Ottoman Empire was approaching its final disintegration; as James Finn prophesied in *Stirring Times*, 'the Turkish Empire was drawing to a end [sic], and […] the general scramble was near at hand'.[2] This, according to some traveller-writers, was even believed by Ottoman officials; Ridley Haim Herschell in *A Visit to my Father-Land* reported a conversation with the governor of Beirut, who apparently believed the English possessed an 'aerial machine' and 'seemed to labour under a sort of dread that the English would, ere long, come flying through the air, and take possession of Syria'.[3] Even the pro-Turkish William Hepworth Dixon stressed the superiority of European empires over the Ottomans, claiming in *The Holy Land* that 'the masters of Delhi and Algiers [i.e. the British and French Empires] might become the masters of Jerusalem in a single week, if it depended solely on the assertion of physical power'.[4]

Belief in the "return" of the Jews was entwined with imperial politics.[5] Numerous British figures, including traveller-writers discussed in this thesis, formulated plans for the colonisation of Palestine by Jews under British protection and the exploitation of indigenous Palestinian labour, sometimes with the maintenance of formal Ottoman sovereignty over the area.[6] Many of these plans were an unwieldy combination of colonialism, settler colonialism and lip-service to Ottoman rule, perhaps giving Zionism and Israel a status among metropolitan colonial enterprises or 'exocolonisation', as well as settler colonialism or 'endocolonisation', in John Collins's terminology.[7] This idea will be explored in this section.

Many travellers wrote explicitly on a Palestine under British control. The increasing hegemony of the British Empire spurred traveller-writers to entertain the

[2] James Finn, *Stirring Times, or Records from Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), Volume 2, p. 301
[3] Ridley Haim Herschell, *A Visit to my Father-Land, Being Notes of a Journey to Syria and Palestine, With Additional Notes of a Journey in 1854.* (London: Aylott & Co., 1856 [1843]), p. 186
[4] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1869 [1865]), p. 391
[5] See Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 54-58
[6] For a discussion of a number of these plans other than those analysed in this thesis, see Albert M. Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine", *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 26 (1918), 127-164
[7] John Collins, *Global Palestine* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2011), p. 24

thought of more active British involvement in Palestine, up to outright takeover from Ottoman control. British naval power was present across the Mediterranean, with Britain occupying Gibraltar and Menorca in 1713, Malta in 1814, the Ionian Islands from 1815 until 1864, and Cyprus – *de facto* administered by Britain, though nominally remaining part of the Ottoman Empire until 1914 – in 1878. These territories were sometimes visited by travellers to Palestine who arrived via Mediterranean voyage. For example, after noting with approval the British flag at Gibraltar, William Thackeray wrote in his *Notes of a Journey* that Malta was 'the next British lion […] ready to spring upon Egypt or pounce upon Syria, or roar so as to be heard at Marseilles in case of need'.[8]

The French occupation of Lebanon in 1860 highlighted the danger posed to British interests by rival powers, but also provoked travellers' thoughts on how European occupation could lead to more "efficient" administration of the Orient. Mary Eliza Rogers and Swiss Protestant theologian Philip Schaff (1819-1893) claimed in *Picturesque Palestine* that 'it is an honour to France that she sent a corps of ten thousand men to Syria in the interest of humanity and Christianity. Since then the admirable road from Beirut to Damascus was built by a French company'.[9] Later, the example of Lebanon inspired more thoughts of how Palestine too could be removed from Ottoman control and opened up to colonisation or settler colonialism: Conder reflected in an address to the London Zionist League that 'the formation of the Lebanon province was one of the things which induced me to think that a Jewish province might also be formed in Palestine'.[10]

Britain's 1882 occupation of Egypt, like Cyprus officially an Ottoman province but administered *de facto* by the British, also spurred travellers to think of a British occupation of Palestine. Travellers believed decades earlier that British influence was growing in Egypt until a British occupation would become inevitable. Eliot Warburton wrote in *The Crescent and the Cross* that

> There is an evident expectation in the public mind of Cairo that England must, sooner or later, take a leading part in Egyptian politics; and not

[8] William Makepeace Thackeray [Mr. M.A. Titmarsh], *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo, by way of Lisbon, Athens, Constantinople and Jerusalem: Performed in the Steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1846), p. 28
[9] Philip Schaff, "Damascus" in Charles W. Wilson (ed.), *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (J.S. Virtue and Co., 1881), Volume 2, 143-190, p. 177
[10] Claude Reignier Conder, *The Possibilities of Palestine. (An Address Delivered Before the London Zionist League, Sunday, February 5th, 1905)* (New York: The Maccabæan Publishing Company, 1905), p. 14

> only here, but all over the East, every traveller, at all capable of conversing with the natives, constantly meets the question, "When are the English coming?"

This notion was born out of the Orientalist concept that the West was destined to rule, the East to be ruled. It also owed much to the strategic importance of the Eastern Mediterranean to India. Before the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, the overland passage from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea was used by many travellers to India. 'Cairo is now the crowded thoroughfare of England and India', Warburton wrote, adding – with a metaphor for financial imperialism adjoining confidence in the British Empire's permanency – that Egypt 'is becoming gradually and unconsciously subsidized by the wealth that England lavishes, and hourly more entangled in those golden chains from which no nation ever strove to loose itself'. This, Warburton believed, was not only Egypt's future, but also Palestine's. He again claimed that 'England is expected in the East', adding in reference to Britain's naval interventions at 'Akka that Britain 'has never planted a standard, except in defence of the Crescent, and the integrity of its dominions'. Wondering whether Britain would ever 'come forward to vindicate the Cross', Warburton reasoned that imperial interest, rather than religious concerns, was more likely to make Britain take a more active role in Palestine, 'and the interests of India may obtain what the Sepulchre of Christ has been denied'.[11]

It was assumed by many travellers that Britain's presence in Palestine would facilitate the "return" of the Jews. Yet travellers did not only view this in terms of settler colonisation, with Jews forming a majority capable of excluding the indigenous population and enjoying political independence in Palestine. Travellers rather viewed Palestine's future as a perpetual British colony, in which not only would the Jewish settlers be supported by the metropolitan "mother country", but also indigenous Palestinians would be exploited for their labour and – apparently – experience greater happiness and liberties than under the Ottomans. There was little hint of the actual exclusionary and eliminatory aspects of settler colonialism, as were being demonstrated at the time in the Anglophone settler colonies.[12] An exception was the expectation that a future colonising power would have to act against Bedouin tribes to provide "security" for the settlers, expressed most noticeably by Oliphant as discussed

[11] Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross; or, Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel.* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1858 [1844]), pp. 163, 185

[12] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native*", Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006), 387-409

below, but also by others. Norman Macleod wrote in *Eastward* of the Bedouin raids on farmlands in the Galilee that 'the Turkish government, or even a London "Limited" Company possessing ordinary sense and enterprise, might, with a dozen rifled cannon placed in commanding positions, keep these Ishmaelites at bay, and defy them to steal west of the Jordan'.[13] If the Ottomans could not keep future Jewish settlements safe, a 'London "Limited" Company', perhaps on the lines of the East India Company, might be able to do the job.

Travellers who openly supported a British-occupied Palestine were seemingly unaware of tensions between metropolitan colonialism and settler colonialism. They were also naively optimistic about the possibility of amicable relations between the British Empire, Jewish settlers and Palestinian natives, expected to be grateful to the triangle's other two corners. Travellers repeatedly represented Palestinians as beseeching Britain to rescue them from Ottoman oppression; as Finn noted, 'travellers have often reported in their published journals that the rural population of Palestine have been heard to express a longing for Christian conquest of the country'. Finn himself was unequivocal, claiming that 'all' Palestine's population 'knew that England had been a friend to the oppressed of all races and creeds – ready to advocate the cause of any who were suffering wrong, whether Moslem peasant, or Jew, Samaritan, Druse, or oppressed Christian of whatever Church', and desired liberation from the Ottoman yoke by English justice.[14] Isabel Burton similarly asserted in *The Inner Life of Syria* that 'if Syria could choose her own master, the Maronites would prefer France, and the Greeks orthodox Russia, but all the rest would wish for England'.[15]

These figures, part of Britain's diplomatic presence in the Eastern Mediterranean (Isabel's husband Richard was British Consul in Damascus 1868-1871), stopped short of calling for Palestine's outright takeover by Britain, which remained the Ottoman Empire's most important ally until the 1880s. Nevertheless, they aggrandised Britain's creeping colonisation by claiming that British occupation was desired by the indigenous inhabitants; they also suggested that, given the Ottoman Empire's supposed state of disintegration and the support of all or most of Palestine's communities for British occupation, British colonisation was only a matter of time.

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[13] Norman Macleod, *Eastward* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 242
[14] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 179; vol. 1, pp. 489-490
[15] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land. From My Private Journal* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875), Volume 1, p. 112

Others wrote more candidly of Palestine's being taken by the British Empire, including archaeologists of the Palestine Exploration Fund, supporting Lorenzo Kamel's charge that 'the line between imperialism, religious fanaticism and the scientific method blurred' in the Fund's activities.[16] Charles Wilson in *Picturesque Palestine* claimed like the traveller-writers that 'the belief that the Christians will recapture the city, and that their own tenure of the country is drawing to a close, is widely spread amongst the Moslems in Palestine'.[17] Yet the most ardent expositors from the Fund of Palestine's 'recapture' were Conder and Wilson's colleague in archaeological excavations, Charles Warren.

Conder's thought on Palestine shifted from initially advocating purely metropolitan colonisation without a significant settlement aspect, to support for Zionist settler colonialism without a role for an imperial mother country. Conder expressed his support for Palestine' metropolitan colonisation in *Tent Work in Palestine*. He repeatedly emphasised the indigenous Palestinians' expectation and longing for colonisation:

> There was something almost pathetic in the childish confidence which the poor peasants seemed to repose in the wisdom and power of the English. Habîb told one man that the English would some day take the country, and that then the poor would be made rich; and his listener actually believed that, because he was the poorest, he would be made king of the district.

Conder simultaneously emphasised both the *fellahin*'s pro-British sentiments, and the 'almost pathetic' and 'childish' understanding of Orientals, representing them as perfect subjects for colonial rule. He concluded that 'the happiest future which could befall Palestine seems to me to be its occupation by some strong European power'. Conder predicted that Britain could make use of local anti-Ottoman discontent to advance its imperial interests in Palestine, and that 'among the sturdy peasantry and warlike nomads of Palestine and the desert, she [Britain] might find allies of extreme value in the great task of defending the communications with her Indian Empire'. India would also be valuable in persuading Palestinian Muslims that they would receive good treatment because, according to Conder, 'the Syrian peasant believes that the

[16] Lorenzo Kamel, "The Impact of 'Biblical Orientalism' in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", *New Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 4 (2014), 1-15, p. 6
[17] Charles W. Wilson, "Jerusalem", in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 1, 1-120, p. 70

English Queen, who rules so many millions of Moslems, is herself a believer in some kind of occidental Mohammedism'.

However, Conder expressed scepticism towards the "return" of the Jews, and settler colonialism in Palestine, because of the presence of a native population and the conflict over land should large numbers of settlers arrive. 'Those who have advocated the colonisation of Palestine by Englishmen, Germans, or Jews', Conder wrote, referring to European colonisation plans and the "return" of the Jews, 'seem to forget that a native Moslem population still exists, or to consider them only fit for the fate of the Red Indian and the Australian, as savages who must disappear before the advance of a superior race'.[18] He repeated his belief in a British colonial administration in his article "The Haven of Carmel", extolling the value of Haifa's port and Nablus's central location for a British military occupation. Drawing on the discourse of Ottoman oppression, Conder confidently stated 'we cannot doubt that English administration will be regarded in Palestine with unmixed feelings of delight by all save the cruel and rapacious tyrants who have lived on the misery of the native peasantry'.[19] In the article "The Present Condition of Palestine", Conder wrote that 'English occupation, or protection, would be an assistance to colonisation, or rather to farming by means of native labour'.[20] In an article in the *Jewish Chronicle*, later cited by Oliphant, Conder argued that the principle of colonisation 'is not that of superseding native labour, but of employing it under educated supervision'.[21] Representing Palestine's colonisation as facilitating the exploitation of native labour by Britain stood in contradiction with settler colonial ideology and the practice of Zionism.

Yet Conder's attitude changed, following the arrival of Zionist settlers and establishment of colonies in Palestine. An early sceptic towards the practicability of settler colonialism, he became its strong advocate; as Albert Hyamson commented, 'by his pen and on the lecture platform he did his utmost to further the cause'.[22] In his 1891 article "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", Conder asserted that 'we may perhaps be destined to witness a very remarkable historic event – the return of the Jews to their

[18] Claude Reignier Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880 [1878]), pp. 310-311, 374, 383, 386
[19] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Haven of Carmel", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 125, No. 759 (January 1879), 35-42, p. 41
[20] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Present Condition of Palestine. [Reprinted from the Jewish Chronicle, by Kind Permission of the Editor.]", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Vol. 11 (Spring 1879), 6-15, p. 13
[21] Quoted in Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), pp. 297-298
[22] Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine", p. 154

native land – and a change in the condition of Palestine without precedent in modern times'. Whereas a decade earlier he had pointed to the indigenous population as a factor which would hamper settler colonisation, now Conder wrote that 'the Moslem population does not increase in Syria: the country is empty, compared with its capability of supporting a population'. He continued to recognise the presence of an indigenous population, but denied this would pose a problem for settlement, using South Africa as evidence. Using a racially charged term for black Africans, Conder argued that

> To say that the country is already populated is to make a statement applicable to any other part of the world. The new colonies in South Africa already contain so large a Kaffir population that it seems impossible in many parts to find room for white men, without grievous injustice to a law-abiding and peaceful race of original owners; yet we never hear this urged as a reason against colonisation in Africa.

The transformation in his thinking on colonisation was almost absolute. However, he still stated that Palestine's colonisation would benefit Britain: 'if such colonisation, and such opening up of the country, be effected', Conder claimed, 'Palestine may become a very important source of corn-supply for England'. He also believed this could be accomplished under formal Ottoman sovereignty, though reforms ensuring 'that the colonists should receive valid titles under Turkish law to their holdings' were required.[23]

Further shifts in his thinking are noticeable in two addresses he gave to the London Zionist League in 1905 and 1906. In his first talk, "The Possibilities of Palestine", Conder claimed that he had been the essential inspirer of the First *Aliyah*: after reading articles by Conder in the *Jewish Chronicle*, he boasted, 'the first Zionist came to the conclusion that he would attempt to carry into practice what I was writing about'.[24] In "The Future of Palestine", Conder declared – again inaccurately, given his arguments in *Tent Work* – that he had 'always been in favor of the Zionist movement'. Conder's new vision was a 'neutralized Palestine', removed from Ottoman control and yet not dominated by any European power.[25] This would resemble the unfulfilled Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, in which Britain and France agreed that most of what

[23] Claude Reignier Conder, "Jewish Colonies in Palestine", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 149, No. 908 (June 1891), 856-870, pp. 857, 863-864, 864-865, 867, 868
[24] Conder, *The Possibilities of Palestine*, p. 8
[25] Claude Reignier Conder, "The Future of Palestine" in *The Physical and Political Conditions of Palestine. A course of Lectures delivered under the Auspices of the English Zionist League Session 1906.* (London: English Zionist League, 1907) 36-40, p. 38

would become the British Mandate Palestine would be under international administration, rather than the direct rule of a European power. It was also a step towards Jewish sovereignty over Palestine. Conder now advocated the immigration of a very large number of Jewish colonists, claiming that 'in its prosperous days it must have had a population of at least 10,000,000 more than at present'.[26] Palestine would become a 'West Asian Switzerland; but a West Asian Switzerland must have a population; and who have more right to the country than the ancient race to which it belonged?'[27] Conder used his platform as an "expert" on Palestine to advocate a course leading to political independence for a Jewish settler society, unfettered by association with Britain.

Warren authored a manifesto for a hybrid of metropolitan and settler colonialism in his *The Land of Promise*, addressing European statesman and financiers sympathetic to the Jewish "return" to Palestine. The work's subtitle, *Turkey's Guarantee*, reflected the Sublime Porte's indebtedness to Western Europe. Warren protested that he advocated 'no spoliation of Turkish lands, no confiscation of her territory'; rather, he proposed the creation of a European-administered colony in Palestine, still formally under Ottoman sovereignty, but allowing Europe to reap the profits.[28] As Tadhg Foley points out, colonisation and settler colonialism were frequently justified on economic grounds for the profits they could generate.[29] Warren set out his plan in detail:

> My proposal is to allow a Company, similar to the old East India Company, to govern and farm Palestine for twenty years, paying to Turkey its present revenue; to the creditors of Turkey a proportion of the interest due, taking for itself six per cent. on its capital, and expending the remaining revenue in improving the country.

Similarly to other travellers' desires, Palestine would be brought gradually into the orbit of the British Empire. Yet Warren added, 'let this be done with the avowed intention of gradually introducing the Jew, pure and simple, who is eventually to occupy and govern this country'. Warren forecasted an even larger number of settlers than Conder, writing that 'a population of fifteen millions might be accommodated' in

[26] Conder, "The Future of Palestine", p. 37
[27] Conder, *The Possibilities of Palestine*, p. 15
[28] Charles Warren, *The Land of Promise; or, Turkey's Guarantee* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1875), p. 4
[29] Tadhg Foley, "'An Unknown and Feeble Body': How Settler Colonialism was Theorised in the Nineteenth Century" in Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (eds.), *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 10-27

Palestine. Warren's plan combined British financial imperialism and administration based on the East India Company, with massive Jewish settler colonisation, and the formal maintenance of Ottoman rule.

Warren envisaged 'the Turks being removed from the pashalic, as has already been done in the Lebanon by the great Powers'.[30] Similar arguments about the supposed financial benefit to the Ottoman treasury of a foreign-administered and/or Jewish colony were later made by Oliphant in *The Land of Gilead* and his meeting with Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918, sultan 1876-1908), and by Theodor Herzl in his meeting with Abdul Hamid in 1901, in both cases unsuccessfully.[31] Subsequent to Herzl's failure, the Zionist movement changed strategy, seeking the patronage of a European imperial power able to remove the barriers to colonisation. This further reflected the preference of Warren, Oliphant and other travellers for a Jewish colony in Palestine operating as a client to Britain. In 1902, Herzl told Alfred de Rothschild (1842-1918) that he wished 'to found a Jewish colony in a British possession'.[32]

Warren also stressed supposed benefits Western colonisation would bring to indigenous Palestinians, as well as Jewish settlers. Like many others, Warren was convinced that 'the people of Palestine, worn with extortion and misery, groaning in agony, cry to the Frank Christian, "Come over and help us"'. Using Crusader-era terminology, Warren claimed further that colonisation was not only desired by Palestinians, but rooted in their beliefs and traditions. 'They are expecting the Frank to take the land', he stated bluntly:

> there seems to be some old tradition among them that it belongs to others (no doubt to the Jews); but they think it refers to the Franks. They ask us, "When are you coming?" The villagers would gladly welcome us. The townspeople say "Come you must, whether we like it or no."

Colonisation was also dictated by the nature of "the Orient", which demanded European rule because it could not rule itself. 'The government by Europeans, for the first twenty years, is necessary merely for the purpose of educating the country to govern itself as a great nation should', Warren stated, neglecting to mention what would happen to the formal Ottoman sovereignty after this period elapsed. 'At present

[30] Warren, *Land of Promise*, pp. 5, 11
[31] In his diary, Herzl reported himself saying to the Sultan: 'The thorn, as I see it, is your *dette publique* [public debt]. If that could be removed, Turkey would be able to unfold afresh its vitality, in which I have faith'. Raphael Patai (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl* (New York and London: Herzl Press and Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), Volume 4, p. 1114
[32] Patai (ed.), *Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, vol. 4, p. 1293

it is totally unfit for self-government. An attempt to pursue such a course would only end in anarchy and ruin'.

Warren's colonisation scheme was not only concerned with the settlement of Palestine by Jews, but was also a metropolitan colonial project, in which the native people, supposedly already giving their consent for European rule, would have their labour and resources exploited for the benefit of the Ottoman Empire's creditors. The ultimate function of a colonised Palestine, however, would not be the enrichment of the metropole or the performance of a civilising mission, but to fulfil the "return" of the Jews. 'Let the coming of the Frank be but the means to a great and glorious ending, the regeneration of Palestine – the return of the Jews', Warren ended his tract.[33] The 'great nation' educated to govern itself under European tutelage was not the existing society of Palestinian Muslims and Christians, or Jews of the Old *Yishuv* already in Palestine, but new Jewish settlers.

In Warren's image of colonised Palestine, there was no expectation of contradiction between the colonial power's support of the settlers and their rule over the indigenous people, or between metropolitan colonial control and the settler movement. These oversights were replicated by the British decades later, in the contradictory promises to the Arabs in the Hussein-McMahon correspondence of 1915-1916 and to the Zionist movement in the Balfour Declaration, and subsequently the incorporation of the Balfour Declaration into the Mandate's charter whilst the League of Nations' mandates system was, theoretically, intended to prepare native populations for self-government. Of all the colonisation schemes devised by British travellers, Warren's vision (minus the formal Ottoman sovereignty) most closely resembled Britain's attempted balancing act during the Mandate period.

[33] Warren, *Land of Promise*, pp. 4, 11, 24

## II: 'The Desert Now Rejoices as a Garden': Representing Settler Colonial Projects in Palestine

Significantly contributing to travellers' support of metropolitan or settler colonialism in Palestine were the existence of settler-colonial projects preceding Zionism, and the increasing presence of these colonies around the landscape. They attracted traveller-writers' interest and were described in many of the travelogues. Any incidence of immigration into Palestine, even if it was of small numbers of Ottoman Muslims from elsewhere in the Empire, was viewed with excitement, as travellers believed observed them for evidence of how larger projects might fare. For example, of one such case in his *Haifa* Oliphant recorded that he 'was anxious to visit Cæsarea to judge for myself of the prospects of this embryo colony, and make personal acquaintance with this new and interesting class of immigrants' of Bosnians and Herzegovinian arrivals.[34]

Northern European Protestant settler colonies, sites where British travellers generally felt comfortable, seemed like a dress rehearsal for the more important Jewish colonisation. Yet there were also notes of scepticism; Ada Goodrich-Freer, for instance, in her *Inner Jerusalem* wrote that 'the effective colonization of the Holy Land' had been 'for a long time in the hands of a class […] who can best be described as "cranks"'.[35] This section reviews the representations of two settler projects in Palestine, the Meshullam farm near Artas, and the German Templar colonies.

### II.I: 'Flowing with Milk and Honey': Traveller-Writers and the Farm at Artas

John Meshullam (1799-1878), a Jewish convert to Evangelical Christianity from London, inspired by the "return" of the Jews acquired land near Artas southwest of Bethlehem in 1845, and received permission to move there with his family in 1850. He was joined by a number of American millenarians.[36] Much about Meshullam's project was deeply attractive to Evangelicals: he was a converted Jew, he had "returned" to the Holy Land, and unlike the city-bound Jews of the Old *Yishuv* living on charitable donations, he used the sweat of his brow to farm the land. The farm's site had existing

[34] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), p. 184
[35] Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (Archibald Constable and Co., 1904), p. 38
[36] For a comprehensive discussion of the settlement, see Falestin Naili, "The Millenarist Settlement in Artas and its support network in Britain and North America, 1845-1878", *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 45 (Spring 2011), 43-56

interest to Bible-obsessed travellers, being associated with the gardens of Solomon. Seeing contemporary European-style farming in this location fired Evangelicals' minds.[37] Multiple traveller-writers visited Meshullam's settlement and reported on it in positive terms.

Visiting the settlement in 1854, Herschell waxed lyrical on the operation he found. 'Two or three years ago this spot was entirely untenanted and uncultivated; but, by Mr. Meshullam's energy and perseverance, trees and plants of all kinds have now sprung up', Herschell claimed. 'The ground, wherever cultivated, has certainly yielded an abundant return, entirely bearing out its appellation of "flowing with milk and honey"'.[38] With a Biblical quotation, Herschell suggested that Meshullam's settlement was the beginnings of prophecy's fulfilment. Elizabeth Rundle Charles wrote similarly in *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas*, reasoning that the value of Meshullam's colony lay not in its economic viability, but in its importance for Palestine's "regeneration" and the Jewish "return":

> As to the economical value of this farm as a missionary experiment I can offer no opinion; but its value to us was very great, as a restoration of the Bible pictures of the Holy Land in its days of glory and beauty. Such as this valley is, the whole land in its peopled and cultivated portions must have been […]

Charles followed this passage with a slew of Bible quotations emphasising the land's fertility, blurring the line between the ancient past as depicted in the Bible, and the settler colonial project of the present.[39]

Henry Baker Tristram wrote enthusiastically on Meshullam's settlement on two occasions. In *The Land of Israel*, Tristram approvingly called Meshullam 'a converted Jew, and an excellent and intelligent man', and while he noted that Meshullam 'has had to contend with many difficulties', he asserted that 'the place promises to become an useful rallying point for the Protestant Jews, and has already shown the capabilities of this neglected soil'. Tristram recorded that 'various travellers have assisted the scheme by purchasing a little plot', including Hariot Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood Lady Dufferin (1843-1936), the wife of the British commissioner in Syria, and Queen

[37] For references to Meshullam's farm and Solomon's gardens, see Elizabeth Rundle Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (London: S. Nelson and Sons, 1866 [1862]), p. 126; Henry Baker Tristram, "Bethlehem and the North of Judæa" in *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. 1, 121-192, pp. 138
[38] Herschell, *Visit to My Father-Land*, p. 217
[39] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 126

Victoria's second son Albert (1844-1900). Tristram claimed the site was 'productive but unpicturesque', though he praised Meshullam's imported farming techniques *vis-à-vis* the local *fellahin*: he claimed that the settler had 'introduced the use of the wheelbarrow, supposed to be the first wheel vehicle in the country since the Roman days, and an object of wonder to all the neighbourhood'.[40] Modernity was literally rolling into the Orient with Meshullam's wheelbarrow. Years later in *Picturesque Palestine*, Tristram expressed his admiration for the settlement compared to the landscape (and indigenous agriculture) roundabout, writing 'when first we visited the valley, twenty-five years since, it was bleak and bare like the surrounding country; now on entering it we find ourselves suddenly in a bright contrast of cultivation and luxuriant verdure, with vegetables of every kind shaded by orchards that soon may recall Solomon's'. He claimed that the settlement was 'now the important source of the supply of the Jerusalem market', and celebrated 'the efforts of friends of the [London] Jews' Society, seeking to provide agricultural employment for the Christian Jews on their own land'.[41]

Finn threw himself into supporting Meshullam's project while he acted as British Consul. Elizabeth Charles reported that she was escorted from Jerusalem by Finn and his wife when she visited Artas, 'in which they took especial interest, on account of the model farm lately commenced there with the object of affording employment to Jewish converts'.[42] In *Stirring Times*, Finn described his frequent visits to the farm. On one occasion, he visited the settlement with Jerusalem's Ottoman governor, and set out the benefits he believed it could provide:

> It was possible that the spectacle of a paradise of gardens and orchards, where only a few years ago all had been desolation, a flourishing village of natives where lately had been only ruins, and regular payment of a large sum of taxes to the Sultan's treasury from a place heretofore paying nothing (and legally exempt), might infuse useful ideas on the subject of redeeming waste lands, filling the Sultan's exchequer, and changing marauding natives into cultivators of the soil, and all this in connexion with Jewish industry.[43]

[40] Henry Baker Tristram, *The Land of Israel: A Journal of Travels in Palestine, Undertaken with Special Reference to its Physical Character* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1865), p. 400
[41] Tristram, "Bethlehem and the North of Judæa", pp. 138-139
[42] Charles, *Wanderings Over Bible Lands*, p. 121
[43] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 294

This was an early example of the argument that settler colonialism would be a boon for the Ottomans, as discussed in the section above. Meshullam's experiment also provided the blueprint for Finn's own more ambitious settler colonial venture of Kerem Avraham, discussed below. Finn's memoir, which sought to vindicate his time in Jerusalem, gave no hint of Finn's subsequent tension with Meshullam and the scandal which led to Finn's recall to London after Meshullam's son Peter, was killed in a dispute with Palestinians, an early instance of indigenous-settler conflict.[44]

There were negative depictions of Meshullam's settlement, some of which hinted at conflict between the settlers and indigenous locals. While Macleod approved of the 'attempt […] being made to introduce model gardens, where converted Jews may support themselves by their own industry', he also cast doubt on the colony's future, writing 'it is difficult to determine how far the benevolent experiment will succeed. It is not in a hopeful condition at present'.[45] Josias Leslie Porter in *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* gave voice to the settler fear of the native's lurking presence on the edge of the colony, and anxiety manifested towards the wild and dangerous landscape beyond the colony's borders. After 'an adventurous Jewish family had settled' near Artas, wrote Porter, and had 'by skill and industry had clothed its rocky slopes and bare glen with gardens of fruit and vegetables and fields of corn', the area had become 'a pleasant spot'. Nevertheless, he continued,

> the bleak hills and rugged cliffs overhead, and the prowling Arabs all around, ever on the watch for a favourable chance to steal, made it wild withal. One cannot get over the feeling of loneliness when he settles down, even for a short time, in such a place. Security, civilization, and peace seem to have gone. Nature in her sternest forms encircles us; and man, untutored and untamed, hovering on the borders of his desert home, robs us of all pleasure, and makes life almost a burden.[46]

Such an attitude, in which the behaviour of the 'untutored and untamed' indigenous population is construed as a threat, is a hallmark of the settler mindset, in which

[44] Naomi Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders: The Western Rediscovery of Palestine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 130-131. See also Naili, "The Millenarist Settlement in Artas"
[45] Macleod, *Eastward*, p. 211
[46] Josias Leslie Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), pp. 131-132

'conduct associated with indigeneity is viewed as a mark of abnormality, uncertainty, and dangerousness'.[47]

Later British travellers, writing after organised Zionist immigration had begun, were keen to put a more positive spin on the Artas settlement's example as a settler colony. While Meshullam's band of followers, converted Jews and Christians, were worlds apart from the Zionist settlers, with their outlook rooted in millenarian Protestantism, travellers tried to cast them as antecedents of Zionism, or even the very first Zionists. Goodrich-Freer wrote that, after a number of Meshullam's followers left the colony, 'Sir Moses Montefiore came to the rescue and established some of the malcontents in an orange-garden in the plain of Sharon, the seed of the movement long afterwards known as "Zionism"'.[48] Similarly, referring to a pedagogic element of the operations at Artas (unmentioned in any other works discussed in this thesis), J.E. Hanauer claimed in his *Walks About Jerusalem* that 'any who are interested in the modern Jewish agricultural colonies in Palestine, may perhaps not be aware of the fact that the first germ of these was undoubtedly "The Agricultural Manual Labour School," a work of faith started in Artass some fifty-five years ago'.[49] These statements gave an indication of the desire of some traveller-writers to link Zionist settlement in Palestine, once it had begun, to the by then already historical British projects for the conversion of the Jews and their farming of the land.

## II.II: 'Shrewd, Industrious, Godfearing Germans': Representing the Templar Colonies

The German Templar colonies around Palestine gave traveller-writers more opportunities to represent settler colonialism, once again of European Protestants, though their beliefs seemed esoteric to British Evangelicals. The first German colony

[47] Jeffrey Monaghan, "Settler Governmentality and Racializing Surveillance in Canada's North-West", *The Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie*, Vol. 38, No. 4, *Park/Santos special issue* (2013), 487-508, p. 489

[48] Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, p. 40. According to the account in Abigail Green's biography of Montefiore, the eccentric American millenarian Clorinda Minor (1806-1855) who was among Meshullam's followers until 1851 (and was named by Goodrich-Freer), began on her own initiative to cultivate land outside Jaffa belonging to a rabbi. Montefiore attempted to purchase this land, but was foiled by Minor's refusal to give up her claim of a lease. Presumably, the situation ended in Montefiore's favour with Minor's death. These facts hardly resemble Goodrich-Freer's claim that Montefiore established the former settlers of Artas on the land, or that this was the 'seed' of Zionism. Abigail Green, *Moses Montefiore: Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 249-250

[49] J.E. Hanauer, *Walks About Jerusalem* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, 1910), p. 252

in Palestine was founded near Haifa in 1868, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Six other settlements were founded until 1907, including in Jaffa (1869) and Jerusalem (1878), which were also frequently visited by travellers. Feeling at ease among the German colonists, living amongst them like Oliphant, or staying in their hotels (Haskett Smith provided an account of the Jaffa colony's hotel, with its 'worthy landlord' in his *Patrollers of Palestine*), travellers respected the Protestant work ethic of the settlers.[50] Their ethos of supporting themselves and "regenerating" Palestine through European farming techniques was, like Meshullam's farm at Artas, strongly attractive to Evangelical travellers. Even after the beginning of Zionist settlement, the German colonies remained to many travellers the colonising endeavour *par excellence* in Palestine, though the settlers' efforts were also subjected to criticism.

The features of the German colonies which travellers found most attractive were largely summarised in the previous chapter's discussion of the Haifa colony. Most travellers greatly admired the creation of a settler society which resembled a West European agricultural village, centred around the colonists' farming efforts and pietistic beliefs. They also attributed to the presence of the colonies the building of roads and improvement of transport between Palestinian towns, considered key indicators of the coming of modernity. The German settlements, though inhabited by non-Jewish Christians, accorded to how traveller-writers envisaged the Jews' "return".

James Neil expressed his support of the Templars in in his *Palestine Re-Peopled*, but also critiqued the settlers' beliefs and cast doubt on their chances of success. Neil wrote of 'the highly respectable members of the German community known as "The Society of the Temple"', claiming they had 'helped most materially to improve the condition of the country' to the point that 'they have modified the whole character of life in Palestine, and have rendered the country in every way more civilised, and fit for the residence of Europeans'. This Eurocentric and inaccurate statement (Palestine's inhabitants outside the German settlers' small pockets of influence would not have found 'the whole character of life' had changed at all) demonstrates the view Neil shared with others, that the value of the Templars' efforts was their preparation of the ground for future, more momentous settler-colonial ventures, and possibly Palestine's colonisation by a European power. Yet regarding the Templars' beliefs, Neil complained that 'their tenets are in many respects peculiar,

[50] Haskett Smith, *Patrollers of Palestine* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 35

and their views of the Gospel defective'. He also lamented that 'neither do they engage in any aggressive missionary work'.[51] Whilst respecting their efforts and feeling kinship with the settlers, some British travellers experienced the same lukewarm attitude towards the Templars as with the Zionist settlers, as a settler movement which was not in full accordance with their expectations.

Illustrating a more positive attitude towards the German colonies was the account of David Morison Ross was his account of his visit to the Sarona colony near Jaffa (distinct from the Jaffa colony) in *The Cradle of Christianity*. Ross made a beeline for Sarona straight after arriving in Palestine through Jaffa's port. Ross celebrated the colony at some length:

> What a contrast between old Jaffa with its dirt and din, and Sarona with its cleanliness and peace! Sarona is a German village, with broad streets and substantially built houses, each of which stands in its own garden, ground. Flaxen-haired, blue-eyed children were playing at the doors. At the carpenter's shop there were German waggons and ploughs […] Everywhere there was a suggestion of orderliness, industry and comfort. It reminded me of the almost ideal social life of a Moravian settlement I had once visited […]

Travellers viewed Palestine as dangerous and unruly; the German settlements were an antidote to this, their 'orderliness, industry and comfort' materialised in their neat European houses, streets and allotments, while the 'German waggons and ploughs' symbolised the progress they were supposedly bringing to Palestine. To all this, Ross consciously opposed the preconceived idea of the Orient, 'old Jaffa with its dirt and din'. Even the whiteness of the settler children was praised, implicitly counterposed against the non-white native.

Ross claimed further that the recent German immigrants who brought with them unchanged their European lifestyle, in fact represented a more authentic Palestinian society than did the indigenous society:

> In all my wanderings in Palestine I saw no community whose life was so much in harmony with the sacred associations of the country as that of the Temple colony at Sarona. In a community where there reigns a spirit of order, peace, and mutual trust, and where not only idleness, dirt, and

[51] James Neil, *Palestine Re-Peopled; Or, Scattered Israel's Gathering. A Sign of the Times.* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1877), pp. 26-27

> crime are unknown, but where worldly ambition, grasping selfishness, and other deadly sins are held in check by the power of devotion to Christ, one has less difficulty than elsewhere in realising that he is actually in the Holy Land.[52]

Because of the settlers' religion (radically different from the Christianity of indigenous Palestinian Christians), they could be framed as somehow "indigenous" to Palestine, despite their obvious foreignness; meanwhile, everything associated with the Orient, such as, 'idleness, dirt and crime', was articulated as the aberration in a sacred domain. The celebration of the Palestinian-ness of the settler society reads somewhat sinisterly in light of theory which has underlined the tendency of settlers (perhaps none more pointedly than settlers in Palestine/Israel) to assert their indigeneity, to further marginalise the actual indigenous society.[53]

Ross praised the Sarona settlers' replacement of Arabs in the landscape, and anticipated the later Zionist narrative of progress and "making the desert bloom". 'Where the colonists are settled was waste sandy ground', he claimed, but 'by irrigation and proper methods of agriculture the desert now rejoices as a garden. Where the bedawin but lately roamed at will, feeding their goats and sheep on the scant herbage, there now stands a comfortable German village amid gardens and fruitful fields'. In his portrait of Sarona, Ross came closer than perhaps any other traveller-writer to representing settler colonial society, from the settlers' determination to transport European structures onto new soil, to the discourse of settler indigenisation, to the elimination of native presence from the colonised area, to the image of the land being restored through settler agriculture. While Ross also critiqued the Templars' behaviour – he objected to their attendance of Sarona's 'Bierbrauerei' on Sundays, and complained they were 'not strong in doctrine' – his admiration of the society they sought to build led to his praise for them. Ultimately writing 'in the consecration of themselves to the life Christ lived […] is to be found the secret of spiritual success', he viewed the German Templars' colonisation effort as a divinely favoured endeavour.[54]

The harshest critique of the Templars came from Conder in the 1870s, influencing his hostility towards settler colonialism and preference for metropolitan

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[52] David Morison Ross, *The Cradle of Christianity: Chapters on Modern Palestine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1891), pp. 171-172,
[53] Jane Stafford, "Going Native: How the New Zealand Settler Became Indigenous", *Journal of New Zealand Literature (JNZL)*, No. 23, *Part 1: Special Issue: From Maning to Mansfield: Writing New Zealand 1829-1920* (2005), 162-173
[54] Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, pp. 173, 180, 181

colonialism at the time. Conder was especially familiar with the Haifa colony, staying there for several months in 1872-3, and again in 1875, as he worked on the Survey of Western Palestine. Conder provided a thorough account of the Templars in Palestine, acknowledging their "good points" similarly to other traveller-writers. The settlers were 'hard-working, sober, honest, and sturdy', they were 'a pious and God-fearing people' despite their odd beliefs, and they had accomplished 'the introduction into Palestine of European improvements, which are more or less appreciated by the natives'. Like others, Conder juxtaposed them favourably with indigenous Palestinians, a comparison carrying overt racial overtones:

> The little village of red-cheeked, flaxen-haired peasants, with cheery salutations, and honest smiling faces, is a pleasant place to visit; the women in their short skirts and brown straw hats, and the men in felt wideawakes and grey cloth, contrast most favourably with the dirty, squalid, lying Fellahin.

But significantly exceeded his reckoning of their strengths was Conder's list of the settlers' faults, which he asserted 'seem to threaten the existence of the colony'. Most interesting is Conder's representation of the settler-indigenous relations of the German colonies. True to a Eurocentric outlook, Conder saw the source of the disharmony as originating with the Palestinians. As a result of the Ottoman authorities' antipathy towards the settlers, Conder claimed

> the native peasantry […] with the characteristic meanness of the Syrians, take the opportunity to treat with insolence people whom they believe they can insult with impunity. The property of the colonists is disregarded, the native goatherds drive their beasts into the corn, and several riots have occurred, which resulted in trials from which the colonists got no satisfaction.

The native population's hostility and the inefficiency of Ottoman rule were framed by Conder as the two impediments to effective settlement. Traveller-writers would suggest remedies for both, the partial or total elimination of the former from the colonised space, and the curtailing or removal of the latter from Palestine. Conder did admit that 'the indiscretion of the younger men' among the colonists had made things worse for the settlers, as 'they have repaid insolence with summary punishment' towards their Palestinian neighbours, creating a 'feud with the surrounding villages'

and a 'hostile feeling' which 'is not unlikely to lead to very serious difficulties on some occasion of popular excitement'.

In language saturated with racial pseudoscience and fear of miscegenation, Conder also slammed some Templars for apparently engaging in mixed marriages with Palestinians. 'The children of such marriages are not unlikely to combine the bad qualities of both nations', Conder averred, insisting that 'it is only by constant reinforcements from Germany that the original character of the colony can be maintained'.[55] Conder's dislike of these mixed marriages was an expression of desire for a "pure settlement colony", with the native excluded on all levels.[56] In Conder's writing this was expressed through distaste for race-mixing and the desire to keep the colony racially 'pure': the settlement project had to remain European and totally distinct from the indigenous society if it was to succeed.

Despite making these and other criticisms, Conder nevertheless saw something of value in the German settlers' activity. As he explained:

> should European attention be ever generally turned to Syria, it may be a matter of no little importance, that men acquainted with the language and the people, and, at the same time, trustworthy and honest, are to be found, who could render material assistance to new-comers, even though not attracted to the land by the belief that it is the natural inheritance of a true Israel, composed of any other nationality except the Jews.[57]

The German Templars could prove useful in assisting future Jewish settlers, and perhaps whichever European power might support them. This lay at the heart of many travellers' attitudes towards the Templars: whether they admired them or viewed them with scepticism, to British Evangelicals their interest lay in the example they could provide for Jewish settlers. Yet there were also projects, whether actually realised or remaining on paper, authored by British travellers, which provided more direct antecedents, discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

[55] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, pp. 355-362
[56] For a discussion of the pure settlement type colony in the context of Zionist settler colonialism in Palestine, see Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach" in Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London: Routledge, 1999), 72-85, p. 76
[57] Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, p. 363

## III: 'Labouring in the Open Air for Daily Bread': The Settler-Colonial Project of Kerem Avraham[58]

British travellers did not only develop proto-Zionist ideology justifying settler colonialism in Palestine; some actively contributed to settler projects of their own. The next sections explore two such ventures under the control of British individuals who left written records of these projects. This section is dedicated to the earlier endeavour, a farm outside Jerusalem named Kerem Avraham for Jewish labourers, founded by James Finn and his wife Elizabeth Anne Finn (1825-1921) in 1854, and described extensively in *Stirring Times*. The following subsections explore through the Finns' lives in Jerusalem and the text of *Stirring Times* the motivations and ideology underlying Kerem Avraham; discuss the transformation of the Palestinian landscape effected by the farm's operations; explore the relationship between Arab Palestinian and Jewish labourers at the site, and the prefiguring of Zionist labour ideology; and finally evaluate the memorialisation of the Finns and Kerem Avraham by the State of Israel.

### III.I: 'Heaven Helps Those Who Help Themselves': The Genesis of Kerem Avraham

Finn was the second British Consul in Jerusalem, holding the post from 1846 to 1863. His previous career, including the study of Hebrew and close association with the London Jews Society (LJS), showed Finn to be an arch philo-Semite and passionate advocate of the Jews' conversion to Evangelical Protestantism. Elizabeth was the daughter of the Hebrew scholar and LJS missionary Alexander McCaul (1799-1863), who had been offered the first Jerusalem Protestant Bishopric. According to a 1903 article, McCaul taught the infant Elizabeth the English and Hebrew alphabets simultaneously.[59] When selected as Consul, Finn formally departed the LJS, should it lead to suspicions that his sympathies could lie disproportionately with Palestine's

[58] This section contains some material from a paper written by the author of this thesis, Gabriel Polley, "From Karm al-Khalil to Kerem Avraham: A British Settler Colonial Outpost Near Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No.1 (2019), 51-73

[59] Anonymous, "The Returning Hebrews: A Glance at the Work of the Syrian Colonisation Fund", *Quiver*, No. 985 (January 1903), 1044-1051, p. 1045

Jews.[60] However, his time as Consul was still marked by controversy. According to Naomi Shepherd, he 'consistently exceeded his brief' in his activities with Jerusalem's Jews.[61] As noted above regarding Finn's involvement with Meshullam, his activities created enemies, eventually dethroning Finn as Consul.

Finn's attitude towards Palestine and Jews were summarised in an 1857 letter to the Foreign Secretary George Villiers (1800-1870) and the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Lord Stratford de Redcliffe (1786-1880). Finn claimed that Palestine was 'in a considerable degree empty of inhabitants and therefore its greatest need is that of a body of population', or would be threatened by French and Russian expansionism. The Ottoman Sultan, Finn thought, must 'procure a population which should be both grateful and loyal – and to take the initiative in putting them into the country'. It was, of course, Jews who would form this population. Finn rejected the removal of Palestine from Ottoman control, but recommended the granting of Ottoman citizenship to the proposed Jewish immigrants, and their formation of agricultural colonies 'in partnership with the Arab peasantry', which would be initially exempted from taxation. Despite the small number of Jews who converted to Christianity, Finn believed there were enough 'baptized Christian Israelites, if they could be assembled together, to give a tolerable population to Palestine'.[62]

The Finns were at the heart of the British community in Jerusalem. The couple was deeply engaged in Evangelical charitable organisations for poor Jews, particularly those (few) converts to Christianity.[63] Kerem Avraham, initiated in 1854, was the culmination of these philanthropic proto-Zionist projects, as well as a precursor of the Zionist agricultural colony. Both James and Elizabeth wrote about their time in Jerusalem after returning to Britain. Elizabeth published novelised accounts such as the 1866 *Home in the Holy Land*, while James authored *Byeways in Palestine*, a more conventional travelogue. He also wrote a memoir of the Crimean War years, 1853 to 1856; the first draft of this was completed in 1870.[64] After his death, the work was edited by Elizabeth and published as *Stirring Times*, an attempt to vindicate Finn's

[60] For this and other details of Finns' life, see Beth-Zion Lask Abrahams, "James Finn: Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem Between 1846 and 1863", *Transactions & Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 27 (1978-1980), 40-50
[61] Shepherd, *Zealous Intruders*, p. 128
[62] Albert M. Hyamson (ed.), *The British Consulate in Jerusalem in Relation to the Jews in Palestine 1838-1914* (London: Edward Goldston, 1939), Vol. 1, pp. 249-253
[63] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), pp. 179
[64] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, p. xviii

time in office, particularly his work with the Jews and his ambitious projects such as Kerem Avraham.

Finn's retelling of Kerem Avraham began with famine in Jerusalem, caused, according to Finn, by a heavy winter, taxes imposed as a result of the war, and grain speculation. Though the poor of all religions were victims of the food shortages, it was the poor Jews for whom Finn had the most concern. In particular Russian Jews suffered, since the *chalukah* payments from Jews in Russia had ceased owing to the war between Russia and Turkey. 'The spectacle was heartrending,' Finn wrote of the scene of British missionaries distributing bread to the Jews:

> many were crying from mere weakness – some with young babies in arms, some staggering in fever or ague fits, who had got up from bed because their children were crying for food. Most were drenched with snow and rain, and perished by the keen wind blowing through their summer rags. It needed three stout kawwasses [Ottoman guards] to keep off the crowd.

Such charity 'was all very inadequate to meet the mass of misery with which we had to cope', and Finn sought funds 'to enable us to relieve the destitute Jews by giving them employment'.[65] There was no shortage of Evangelical-led institutions in Jerusalem which aimed to provide work for Jews; however, these failed to answer Finn's proto-Zionist passion for Jewish agriculture in Palestine.[66] Farming the land would not only begin to fulfil prophecy, it would also allow the Jews to gain their independence from the *chalukah*, much despised by British travellers as discussed in Chapter Six. Practically, farming would also be of more use during famines than the crafts and trades taught in the existing charitable institutions.

The Finns' altruism towards the Jews drew from the concept of charity prevalent in the Victorian age. The nineteenth century in Britain witnessed the industrial revolution and the spread of urban poverty. Middle-class Evangelicals 'began to feel that it was part of their duty to make some attempt to relieve the suffering which they saw around them and to help those who were so obviously in need'.[67] Evangelical charity in Britain's urban centres had much in common with the relief work in

[65] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 1, pp. 436 441, 442
[66] For some of these projects, see A.L. Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine, 1800-1901: A Study of Religious and Educational Enterprise* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 75-76
[67] Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of their Social Work* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), p. 19

Jerusalem. The impoverished Jews in Finn's account shared much with the destitute working class of Manchester or East London. Jews were the fallen, like the criminals, gin addicts and prostitutes whose souls Evangelicals in Britain tried to save, though the Jews' (collective) crime was breaking their covenant with God. Evangelical charity and proto-Zionism were causes inseparably linked in nineteenth-century Britain. Humanitarian causes such as the abolition of the slave trade were discursively linked with the protection of the Jews especially in the Ottoman Empire, in what Abigail Green calls 'an imperialism of human rights'.[68] The most significant Evangelical social reformer of the age, Lord Shaftesbury, was also one of the most leading Christian Zionists. At the crossroads of proto-Zionism in the service of the British Empire and Evangelical philanthropy, also stood in Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, Finn considered the distribution of charity to passive recipients to be 'very inadequate'. The mid-nineteenth century was also the apex of the 'self-help' movement.[69] Drawing on traditions of Enlightenment individualism and Benthamite Utilitarianism, the movement's leader was Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), who finished the manuscript of his book *Self-Help* in 1854, though the work was published only in 1859. '"Heaven helps those who help themselves" is a well-tried maxim', Smiles' work began. 'The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual; and, exhibited in the lives of many, it constitutes the true source of national vigour and strength. Help from without is often enfeebling in its effects, but help from within invariably invigorates'.[70] This ideology exerted significant influence on the ethos of early Zionism: Nahum Sokolow wrote that 'self-reliance is of the essence of Zionism' and 'Zionism is real Jewish self-help'.[71]

Finn integrated this spirit into his project 'to relieve distress by means of labour, and to heal the cankering evil of pauperism'.[72] Self-help through labour, particularly agricultural labour, appealed to Finn for several reasons. Firstly, it would provide a practical solution to the hunger of Jerusalem's poor. Secondly, the experience of raising crops from the soil would educate previously landless Jews in essential skills for strengthening their community and building self-sufficiency. As discussed in

[68] Abigail Green, "The British Empire and the Jews: An Imperialism of Human Rights?", *Past & Present*, No. 199 (May 2008), 175-205
[69] T. H. E. Travers, "Samuel Smiles and the Origins of "Self-Help": Reform and the New Enlightenment", *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2(Summer 1977), 161-187
[70] Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help; With Illustrations of Character, Conduct and Perseverance* (London: John Murray, 1868), p. 1
[71] Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), Volume 1, p. xxi
[72] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 75

Chapter Six, many travellers believed that Jews had lost the knowledge of farming during the centuries of diaspora. A collective, educational enterprise for Jerusalem's Jews would be the start of their national regeneration.

Finally, *labour* as a form of self-help was particularly relevant to the Jews in Jerusalem, many of whom did not engage in any work, instead surviving on the *chalukah*. The Jews' poverty Finn believed was caused by 'the cankering evil of pauperism': not only the difficult social conditions they faced in Palestine, but also their attitude which resigned them to poverty and made them content with a parasitic existence. Giving the Jews useful employment through work and farming would eventually do away with the *chalukah*, break the power of the community's conservative religious leaders, and reform Jews' characters. It would bring them into the capitalistic age and an understanding of the Protestant work ethic, simultaneously imbibing Victorian morality and fulfilling prophecy – producing men who were 'above all temperate and reliable, shrewd and completely devoted to their business, with strictly bourgeois opinions and principles'.[73]

In *Stirring Times*, Finn described the Jewish poverty preceding the founding of Kerem Avraham in sensational terms:

> The state of poverty among the Jews at this time exceeded anything we had before known. Parents were said to be selling their children to Moslems, as the only way of preserving their lives. Some were found dead in their rooms. Among those whom we personally knew there was scarcely a family that was not in the deepest distress. Little children cried themselves to sleep at night for hunger.

The protection of the Jews was a duty of Britain's Consul in Jerusalem, but for the Finns the advancement of the Jews' cause and alleviation of their distress were considered God-given missions. Finn's depiction of poverty had literary qualities that placed it squarely in a nineteenth century literary tradition; Finn's Jews of Jerusalem, living in dire conditions, their families torn apart by poverty, and their bodies physically emaciated from starvation, were the cousins of the slum dwellers of Dickensian social literature. The narrative of Kerem Avraham moved from an image of heartrending poverty at the outset, through the challenges posed by its antagonists, to the redemption of the protagonists and the land itself, including through its renaming.

[73] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 69

### III.II: 'The Very Name of the Ground': From Karm al-Khalil to Kerem Avraham

Finn recounted that 'eight to twelve English acres' of land which would become Kerem Avraham had been purchased in 1852.[74] The land was intended for an 'Industrial Plantation for Employment of Jews of Jerusalem', but it was not until the worsening conditions of 1854 that the Finns sought funds for the project, receiving support from Evangelicals in Britain, India and America. The patch of land around two kilometres northwest of the walled city had been known as Karm al-Khalil in Arabic, which, translated into Hebrew, became Kerem Avraham, "Abraham's Vineyard". 'The very name of the ground was attractive', Finn wrote.[75] As discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Eight, Arabic names were regarded by many travellers and Biblical archaeologists as distortions of the ancient Hebrew, "true" names of sites around Palestine.

Finn's Hebraicisation of the indigenous, Arabic name resembles the Zionist movement's later Hebraicisation of Arabic place names where Zionist settlers purchased land after the 1920s, continuing after the creation of the Israeli state with the renaming of areas around the country by the Naming Committee.[76] The Finns began the process of linguistically labelling the land as a Jewish, Hebrew land. At the same time, Nur Masalha points out that, whilst the Hebrew renaming of the site contributed to the 'memoricide' of Arabic toponyms in Palestine, Finn drew on the local indigenous place name by direct translation 'to link firmly the toponym of the modern colony in Jerusalem to biblical traditions'.[77]

Finn emphasised that 'the design [of Kerem Avraham] was not so much to constitute a rural colony of farmers on this spot, as to afford daily employment *to residents of the city*, returning from work every evening to their families' (emphasis in the original).[78] By contrast, the early Zionist settlements of the First *Aliyah* were

[74] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 60-65. Hyamson presented the genesis of Kerem Avraham slightly differently, stating that Elizabeth Finn had rented an area of land within the walls of Jerusalem, an unspecified number of years before 1852, employing two Jews there. The project was so successful that by 1852, Elizabeth had the idea of purchasing more land to provide more employment. Hyamson considered Elizabeth the guiding light behind Kerem Avraham, 'Mrs. Finn's work of charity': 'To her is due the honour of being the first in modern times to place rakes and spades in the hands of Jerusalem Jews'. Albert M. Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 1917), pp. 72-73
[75] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 66
[76] Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006), pp. 225-226
[77] Nur Masalha, "Settler-Colonialism, Memoricide and Indigenous Toponymic Memory: The Appropriation of Palestinian Place Names by the Israeli State", *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2015), 3-57, pp. 12-13
[78] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 65

established away from Palestine's urban centres.[79] Kerem Avraham was not meant to be the beginnings of a self-contained community, but to provide employment and training for Jews of the Old *Yishuv* wishing to remain in Jerusalem. Yet Kerem Avraham nevertheless represented a kind of colonial outpost, an incursion into the hinterland of Jerusalem which was the domain of the indigenous *fellahin*. Beyond the walls of Jerusalem was a frontier area, into which Finn sent the Jewish workers like colonial pioneers. The immediate countryside outside Jerusalem was represented in travelogues as wild, ungoverned and dangerous, as well as barren and physically hostile.

Sending Jews to claim the land and raise crops from it, was part of a process of "colonising" Jerusalem's surroundings. Finn was highly involved in this process; his house at al-Talbiyeh and Kerem Avraham's buildings were some of the first structures outside Jerusalem's walls. Further, by removing some Jerusalem's Jews outside the walls of the city, if only during the daytime, Finn sought to establish their separation, and place their stamp on a part of the country where they could foster self-reliance. Kerem Avraham was far from a close blueprint for settler colonialism, yet many of the key concerns of later Zionist colonisation were present, including questions of labour and relations between indigenous Palestinians and Jews.

### III.III: 'Labourers in the Field of Abraham': Arab and Jewish Workers at Kerem Avraham

Of the Jews of Jerusalem who were the targets of Kerem Avraham, Finn admitted 'we were not so sanguine as to expect pallid creatures, weakened by hunger and disease, to perform the labours of healthy robust peasants of the villages'.[80] The farm would have to rely, to an extent, on labour provided by local non-Jewish Palestinians. The fetishisation of the 'healthy robust peasants' was common among traveller-writers, not only those such as Conder when he advocated metropolitan rather than settler colonialism – he praised the *fellahin* as 'an energetic and very stalwart race, with immense powers of endurance, seasoned to the climate, temperate, good-natured,

[79] Yossi Katz, "Agricultural Settlements in Palestine, 1882-1914", *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 1/2 (Winter 1988 – Spring 1992), 63-82
[80] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 65

and docile' – but also in the writing of Warren and Oliphant.[81] In *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant quoted Elizabeth Finn who claimed that 'the *fellah* is capable of much good service, whether as a soldier, a cultivator, or a builder: we found that they made excellent agricultural labourers and builders'.[82] This also prefigured early Zionist practices: all the Zionist settlements before 1909 made use of indigenous Palestinian workers.[83] Finn recorded that Arab workers at Kerem Avraham were paid the same as Jewish labourers, even though 'it must be remembered that 3½ piasters given to a Fellahh is to him worth more than twice its value to a poor Jew'. Traditional indigenous farming implements, such as the *fas* (Arabic: pickaxe) and *mejrefeh* (spade), were used.

Yet there was also resistance from local people. Finn claimed that 'it might perhaps have been dangerous in those days for weak defenceless Jews to go alone even so far from Jerusalem to work among the native peasantry', though he claimed his presence was normally enough to keep the workers safe. On one occasion, however, a local man, to whom Finn attributed the motive of wishing to appropriate land for himself, threw stones at the workers. After being briefly arrested the man apparently returned, begging for work at Kerem Avraham. Finn wrote 'we found him at work among them – laughing, skipping, and running – and there was never another attempt at rough usage of our Jewish workmen'. The conflict with indigenous locals was thus smoothed over painlessly, the Palestinians quickly realising the benefits for all that Jewish farming would bring. Like many travellers (and some early Zionist settlers), Finn expected that the indigenous people would wholeheartedly welcome the arrival of Jewish settlers, failing to anticipate the contradictions between settler colonisation and the native population over land.[84]

Finn's vision was not embraced by all Jerusalem's Jews, stern opposition apparently coming from the religious establishment. 'In less than a week afterwards a deputation came on the ground from a Synagogue, and denounced the work as unlawful', recounted Finn. The attempt to wean Jerusalem's Jews away from the *chalukah* and engage them in farming under the tutelage of the British Consul, known for his support for the Jews' conversion, must have seemed highly suspicious to the

[81] Quoted in Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 297-298
[82] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, p. 396
[83] Katz, "Agricultural Settlements in Palestine", p. 75
[84] For early settlers' positive expectations of settler-Palestinian relations, see Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Modernization as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (May 1997), 25-48

Old *Yishuv*'s religious leaders. Finn went to some length to prove there was nothing in the work at Kerem Avraham that contradicted Jewish law. He claimed that several workers were 'profound Talmudists, capable of judging for themselves what was lawful in Rabbinical Law', and that 'young Rabbis of the oldest and proudest families came to ask leave to join the Jews at the work in the fields'.[85] Nevertheless, there was a further showdown in July 1856. After issuing 'violent denunciations against both the Plantation [Kerem Avraham] and Miss Cooper's School of Industry', a group of rabbis 'were posted with whips at the Jaffa gate' to attack the Jewish workers. Portraying his opponents as fanatical enemies of progress, the incarnation of all travellers disdained about the Jews in Palestine, defeated by his workers' determination, Finn vindicated his vision of Jewish farming and a self-supporting community.

Kerem Avraham was an officially secular endeavour with no expressly proselytising Christian aspect, a significant break with Evangelical doctrines, apparently angering some LJS missionaries. 'The perfect freedom and religious liberty of the workpeople were respected. The Jews used to suspend their work for a few minutes at the hour when afternoon sacrifice was formerly offered in the Temple', wrote Finn.[86] This was indicative of the shift in proto-Zionist ideology discussed in Chapter Eight, away from the Jews' conversion, towards their immediate "return", to Palestine and working the land. The freedom of the Jewish workers to practice their religion was recorded in a photograph by the American Colony of Jerusalem (fig. 11.1).[87]

[85] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 66-72. Finn also mentioned that women had also flocked to Kerem Avraham, and were begging for work; however, from fear of being seen as 'imprudent', Finn records that women were instead sent to the Jewesses Institute. *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 72

[86] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 73. Finn wrote that 'one or two [workers at Kerem Avraham] who applied for admission and joined the others in the field had become Christians, but were, like the others, eligible for employment as being Jews in distress'. *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 74

[87] Most likely taken after 1898. See Barbara Bair, "The American Colony Photography Department: Western Consumption and 'Insider' Commercial Photography", *Jerusalem Quarterly*, No. 44 (2010), 39-56


**Figure 11.1:**
**"Ashkenazi Jews at Prayer. (In Abraham's Vineyard),"**
**The American Colony, Jerusalem, reproduced in *Days in Galilee and Scenes in Judea* by Alexander A. Boddy,**
**page 257**

Finn painted a rosy picture of Kerem Avraham's first months. He recorded a rise from 75 to 130 daily workers on the site in the first months (fig. 11.2); bread and eggs were provided daily when the workers arrived on site; olives, fruit and vegetables were grown, and an oil press donated. Finn believed this was the beginning of the long-awaited Jewish "return" and their reclamation of the soil. Other traveller-writers had only stated their cherished hopes for this, but Finn could chronicle the actual beginnings of the new Jewish farming in Palestine, taking place before his eyes. He commented that the agricultural produce from Kerem Avraham was 'enough to prove the fertility of the soil, and the certainty that agricultural enterprise might be profitably carried on in Palestine', underscoring the project's value as a trailblazer for future settler colonial endeavours.[88]

[88] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 74

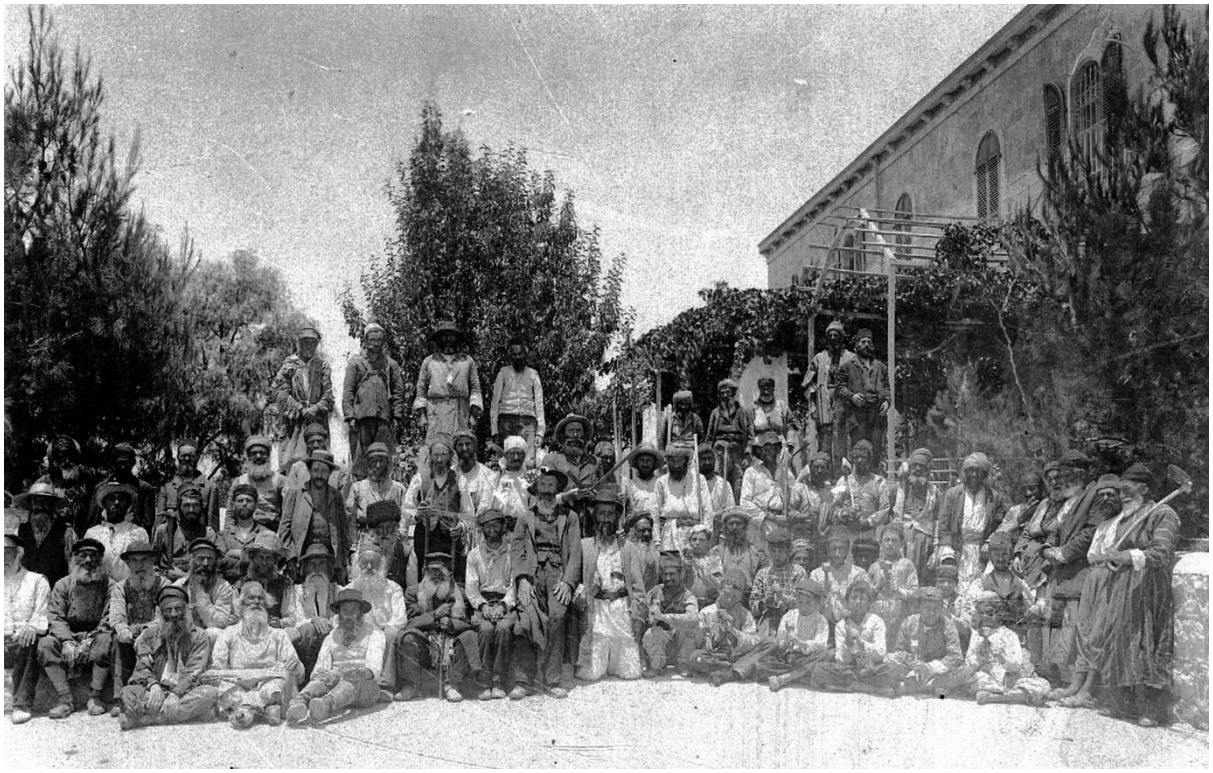

**Figure 11.2:**
**"Jerusalem, Workers in the Kerem Avraham Neighbourhood", c. 1855, from the David B. Keidan Collection of Digital Images from the Central Zionist Archives**

In several ways, Finn's project advanced beyond the Evangelical trappings of proto-Zionism and directly anticipated settler-colonial practices. One of the most significant impacts in Finn's account was on the bodies and souls of the labourers. Finn's narrative adopted a propagandistic tone, resembling later Zionist discourse. Finn recounted how, soon after work at Kerem Avraham began, he witnessed the workers returning home:

> They were met coming over the lanes and fields carrying their baskets and tools on their shoulders; a ragged troop, very ragged but very happy, singing a chorus in Hebrew, "We are labourers in the field of Abraham, our father."
>
> My eyes filled with tears as the words came to recollection, "They shall return to Zion with singing, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads" (Isiah xxxv. 10), taking this as a very small indication of the better days to come for their nation.[89]

[89] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 67

The collective labour, the happiness of the workers at their "return" to Zion, even the act of singing together, featured in later Zionist accounts. For example, an invented tradition of Hebrew folk songs from the 1880s onwards frequently celebrated work in agricultural settlements, seen as remaking both the land and the Jews who farmed it. Finn added that the Sephardi Jews at Kerem Avraham sang songs in Arabic, 'conformably with the Oriental peasant customs'; by pointing out the presence of Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews working (and singing) together on the farm, Finn subtly emphasised his victory in bringing together the two wings of Jerusalem's Jewish community, as well as framing them as authentic Oriental agriculturists.[90]

Finn claimed further effects of Kerem Avraham on Jews employed there. Finn's depiction of his labourers, before they began work and supposedly felt its positive benefits, conformed with travellers' representations of members of the Old *Yishuv* as feeble and pathetic. They were so weakened from starvation that some were unable to walk the short distance to the farm, and additionally, 'suffer[ed] from the great change from a life of study to exposure under the burning Syrian sun'. Soon, however, the workers arrived looking 'not so ragged as formerly – all with clean faces, and some with clean stockings', and diligently saying their Hebrew prayers. Their new cleanliness was significant: as discussed in Chapter Six, many traveller-writers expressed their perceptions of poor hygiene of Jews in Palestine. In Finn's mind, the newfound cleanliness of Kerem Avraham's labourers was another sign of the transformation which Jews would undergo as agriculturists.

Later, Finn claimed their 'health and power of working improved daily'. This strength came not only from the nutritional sustenance the Jews were provided, but also the spiritual succour coming from involvement at Kerem Avraham; when workers had to be laid off, Finn claimed, some of them 'soon sank down – in one case at the Synagogue door – and died of want'.[91] This was a stark illustration of backsliding from a robust life working the land, to the "pauperism" associated with the Old *Yishuv*. The image of the healthy, powerful agricultural labourer was common in written, photographic and poster propaganda of the Zionist movement; the workers on the

[90] S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 152-156
[91] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, pp. 70-75

early settlements were depicted as 'new Jews' transformed through energetic efforts to farm Palestine.[92]

Although Kerem Avraham in its early days was forced to make use of Arab Palestinian labour, Finn foresaw a future in which these new Jews would form self-supporting communities, no longer relying on other sections of Palestinian society for their survival. As Gershon Shafir notes, this became the guiding principle of the Second Zionist *Aliyah* in the early twentieth century; after realising it was impossible to compete with the more numerous, less demanding Palestinian workforce, the settlers sought to achieve 'a homogenous Jewish society in which there would be no exploitation of Palestinians, nor would there be competition with Palestinians, because there would be no Palestinians'. This was to be achieved through the 'conquest of labour', in which all jobs would be filled by Jews.[93] Future settlements along these lines, on a scale much larger Kerem Avraham, was what the Finns had in mind decades earlier. Finn expressed this in prophetic tones:

> The idea of labouring in the open air for daily bread had taken root among the Jews of Jerusalem – the hope of cultivating the desolate soil of their own Promised Land was kindled. These objects were never again lost sight of. The Jews themselves took them up. Considerable progress has been made in both. The time has, perhaps, come for our efforts to be renewed in a more systematic manner for employment of Jews in the Holy Land.

## III.IV: 'Built Among the Plantations': The Legacy of Kerem Avraham

Finn complained that once the immediate danger posed by the famine of 1854 was over, overseas donations dwindled. He admitted that 'permanent and self-supporting institutions' had not by then been created.[94] Nevertheless, Kerem Avraham did survive for some decades after the Finns left Palestine in 1863. Elizabeth continued her support after James's death, forming a charitable organisation variably called the Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews, the Society for the Relief of Persecuted

[92] Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry Before the First World War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 145-146
[93] Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism", pp. 77, 78
[94] Finn, *Stirring Times*, vol. 2, p. 76

Jews, and – perhaps most accurately – the Syrian Colonisation Fund (SCF), in 1882. The multiple names of the organisation were characteristic of the Finns' approach linking philanthropy with colonisation. The SCF continued the administration of Kerem Avraham, provided for impoverished immigrants of the First *Aliyah*, and raised money to send more Jews to Palestine.[95] The aged Shaftesbury was the SCF's first president, drafting the statement of the society's objects, 'to give relief and employment to Jews especially in the Holy Land, till increase of funds shall give us the means to enable them to form themselves into colonies on their own responsibility'.[96] Elizabeth Finn the SCF secretary, and other committee members, wrote frequently to the press beseeching funds; a letter from Finn to the *Times* in 1891 played on British antipathy to Jewish refugees, asking for donations to 'relieve not only the Jews whose condition is desperate, but also the anxiety and congestion here in overcrowded London, by finding them wholesome work and livelihood out of England'.[97] A 1903 report admitted that 'funds have never been sufficient' to set up any Jews on their own land; however, donations from Tunbridge Wells, Halifax and Birmingham allowed for the construction of water cisterns.[98]

Evidence suggests that Kerem Avraham under the SCF partly relied upon low-skilled, and low-paid, Mizrahi Jewish immigrants. Unlike the early days narrated in *Stirring Times* when all workers received equal pay, the 1903 article reported that 'the least skilled employés are paid, according to the ordinary rate of wages of the country, one shilling a day', while 'skilled workers are paid, of course, at a higher rate'.[99] Alexander Boddy in his *Days in Galilee* reported that in the late nineteenth century, he found 'Circassian, Persian, Yemenite and other Jews employed' at Kerem Avraham.[100] A later commentator praised Elizabeth Finn as 'the first to find work for the quick fingers of the Yemenites'.[101] A photograph (fig. 11.3) from during or shortly after the First World War also documents the Yemenite presence at the site. As Yemenite and

[95] For the interchangeable use of these names, see Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine", pp. 135, 140
[96] Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine", p. 140
[97] Elizabeth Anne Finn, "What is to Become of the Refugee Jews?", *Times* (15 June 1891), p. 11
[98] One of these cisterns was a welcome sight to a J. Wilson, one of the British soldiers who occupied Jerusalem in 1917, who wrote in his diary of an 'unexpected discovery of a little bit of home' when he saw the inscription on the cistern donated by Tunbridge Wells. Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 291
[99] "The Returning Hebrews", pp. 1047, 1050, 1049
[100] Alexander Boddy, *Days in Galilee, and Scenes in Judæa, Together with Some Account of a Solitary Cycling Journey in Southern Palestine* (Gay and Bird, 1900), p. 255
[101] Henrietta Szold, "Recent Jewish Progress in Palestine", *The American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 17 (September 1916), pp. 24-158, p. 118

other Mizrahi Jews were often enticed into emigrating to Palestine only to end up as cheap labour, it is likely the Mizrahi workers at Kerem Avraham were also exploited for low wages.[102]

**Figure 11.3:**
**"Types of Yemenite (Arabian) Jews on Abraham's Vineyard, Jerusalem", 1915-1920,**
**from the David B. Keidan Collection of Digital Images from the Central Zionist Archives**

Albert Hyamson reported in 1917 that Kerem Avraham's 'usefulness' had 'continued', specialising in olive oil soap production, and that the workers' efforts had increased the value of the land from £250 to £20,000, an economic vindication of the project and any future settler colonial endeavours in Palestine.[103] However, the First World War was not kind to Kerem Avraham: a small advertisement in the *Times* in late December 1920 – three years after Jerusalem's occupation by Britain – made an 'urgent appeal

[102] See Ella Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Autumn 1999), 5-20, pp. 9, 19
[103] Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, pp. 72-73

for funds' for the Society for Relief of Distressed Jews, stating that, in addition to 'resuming work […] and […] employing a few poor Jews', the Society was 'also trying to repair SOME of the damage done by the Germans and the Turks who cut down and BURNT 78 of our olive and fruit trees. They wrecked our house there, BURNING furniture, doors, and windows'.[104] Elizabeth was still secretary, weeks before her death at 95.

Kerem Avraham itself outlasted her only by a decade. It was surpassed in usefulness and efficiency by the Zionist colonies, under the control of Jews as well as worked by them. This was paralleled by Jerusalem's low standing in the Zionist imagination; whilst Kerem Avraham had been intended to maintain Jewish existence in Jerusalem, Zionist settlements were established far from the Old *Yishuv*'s holy cities, and the expanding or new cities of Haifa and Tel Aviv were also leaving Jerusalem behind. Notice was finally given of the sale of Kerem Avraham's land in the *Times* in April 1931 – in a twist, giving the site's old Arabic name (fig. 11.4).[105]

[104] Anonymous, "Society for Relief of Distressed Jews", *Times* (21 December 1920), p. 15

[105] Both the Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews and Abraham's Vineyard Limited, the company formed in the early 1930s to sell off Kerem Avraham's Jerusalem assets, still exist. The Society, a charity, operates in Britain and Israel, still with teaching 'agriculture or other trades, so as to help them to become self supporting' as part of its aims (written in 1903). Its expenditure in 2017, the most recent figures provided, was £14,000, against an income of £3,500. The Charity Commission, "The Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews" (2019), https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=209963&subid=0 (accessed 13/12/2019) Abraham's Vineyard Limited is registered as a private limited company and a religious organisation. Its officers include individuals residing in Britain and Israel. Its total assets in 2018 were £58. Companies House, "Abraham's Vineyard Limited" (2019), https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/00274742 (accessed 13/12/2019)

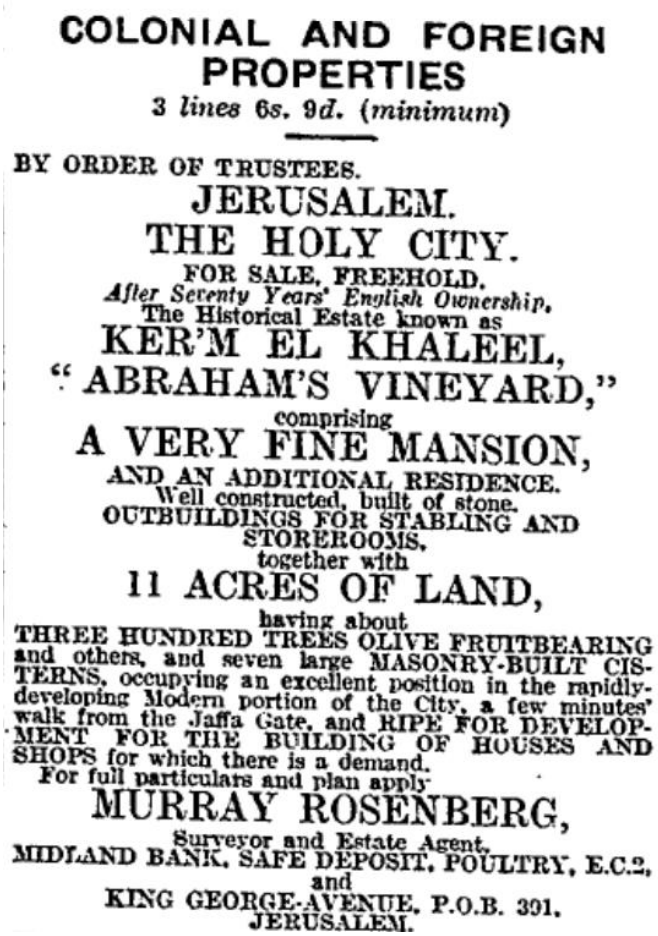

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**Figure 11.4:**
**Notice of Kerem Avraham's sale**
***The Times*, 28 April 1931**
**page 29**

The farmland disappeared under Jerusalem's extramural urban expansion. Israeli novelist Amos Oz (1939-2018), born and growing up in the neighbourhood which supplanted and bore Kerem Avraham's name, recorded how 'huddled little houses were built among the plantations and orchards of the farm and progressively ate into them'. During the Mandate, the main farmhouse was used by the British as a young offenders' institute, an army headquarters and in the Second World War a jail for prisoners of war. After 1948, falling in West Jerusalem, the building was used by a variety of Israeli state forces. Oz wrote that 'the old house has shrunk over the years, as though its head has been pushed down into its shoulders with an axe-blow. It has been judaised. The trees and the shrubs have been dug up, and the whole area of the garden has been asphalted over'.[106] The farm buildings were eventually sold to an

[106] Amos Oz, *A Tale of Love and Darkness* (London: Vintage Books, 2005), p. 117

Ultra-Orthodox Jewish organisation and turned into a girls' school, ironically as Finn viewed his project as part of a struggle against the conservative Jewish establishment. The final victory of that establishment is symbolised in the school's replacement of the New Testament verse which Finn had engraved above the main entrance, with a quotation from the Torah.[107] There is public access to a small display on Finn inside the building.[108]

The memorialisation of the Finns in Israel has been slight. The State of Israel acknowledged a debt to them by sending a representative to the funeral of their daughter Constance (born in 1851 in Jerusalem) in 1950.[109] *Stirring Times* was translated into Hebrew as *Itut Sufa* by the prominent Israeli translator and writer Aharon Amir in 1980 (fig. 11.5). Yet there are no Finn Streets named for them, and to most Israelis James Finn the British civil servant and passionate Evangelical would surely seem a dry and remote figure. Yet the Finns' vision for Kerem Avraham, of Jews working their ancestors' land, providing for themselves with their own labour, closely prefigures the ideals of the Zionist movement. The Finns' writing articulated a discourse similar to that which early Zionist immigrants started to articulate soon after *Stirring Times*' publication. In Kerem Avraham's foreshadowing of later settler colonial Zionist concerns and practices, Finn's project formed a bridge between Evangelical proto-Zionism and settler colonialism. Here also stood Laurence Oliphant, as discussed below.

[107] See Itzik Shwiki, "בית הקונסול פין בשכונת כרם אברהם" (2018), https://shimur.org/בית-הקונסול-פין-בשכונת-כרם-אברהם/ (accessed 30/08/2019) (in Hebrew)
[108] David Asaf, "ברוך הבא :טיול בירושלים של מטה" (2014), http://onegshabbat.blogspot.com/2014/05/blog-post_28.html (accessed 30/08/2019) (in Hebrew)
[109] Lask Abrahams, "James Finn", p. 50

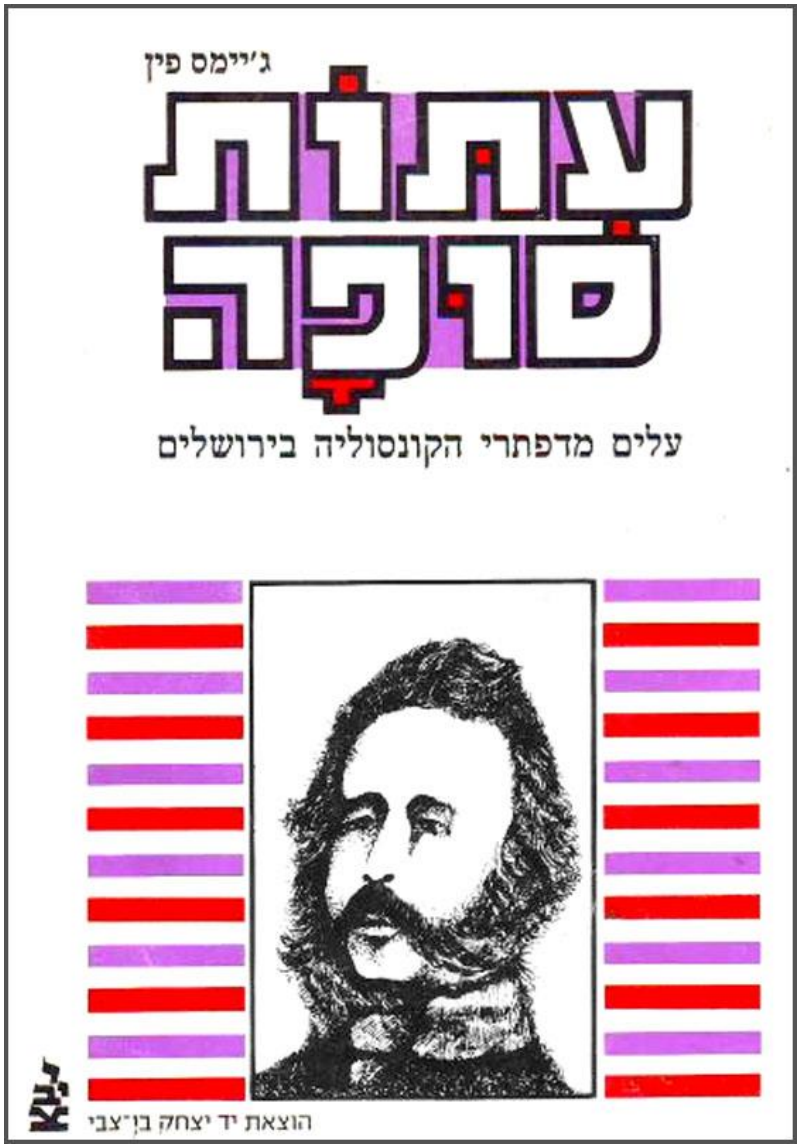


**Figure 11.5:**
**Cover image,**
**Israeli edition of *Stirring Times* (*Itut Sufa*)**

## IV: 'The Entire District of the Belka': Laurence Oliphant and the Gilead Plan

This section considers Oliphant's 1880 plan for a Jewish colony east of the Jordan River, and its legacy. Oliphant has frequently been discussed as a notable British Zionist, though there has been little analysis of his writing.[110] Far more ambitious than Kerem Avraham, though never realised, Oliphant's Gilead plan nevertheless exerted great influence on Zionist settler colonial practices, from the First *Aliyah* until after the Six-Day War in 1967.

### IV.I: Laurence Oliphant in the 'Land of Gilead'

Oliphant's life before early 1879 had little in common with the Finns'.[111] Oliphant's strict Evangelical upbringing did not play a significant role in his career as diplomat, Member of Parliament and novelist before the 1870s. He travelled widely, writing successful travelogues of Russia and Asia; during the Crimean War, whilst the Finns were in Jerusalem, Oliphant was a journalist in the Caucasus. Nevertheless, there is evidence that Oliphant was interested in Palestine for over two decades before his 1879 journey. According to Moses Montefiore's diary, Montefiore met the 27-year-old Oliphant in Malta in May 1857 as Oliphant was *en route* to China. Oliphant 'took a great interest in all matters relating to the Holy Land, and conversed freely with [Montefiore] on certain schemes which might serve to improve the condition of its inhabitants'.[112] Oliphant's early interest in Palestine can tellingly be interpreted against the preponderance of colonisation schemes which had already been devised by the mid-nineteenth century, of which Montefiore was a leading proponent.[113]

For over a decade before Oliphant's close association with Palestine began, he and his wife Alice were involved in an American-based cult, the Brotherhood of the New Life. The Brotherhood's esoteric views had little in common with mainstream Evangelical doctrines, and expressed no specific interest in Palestine. While Moruzzi

[110] See for example Norma Clair Moruzzi, "Strange Bedfellows: The Question of Lawrence Oliphant's Christian Zionism", *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (February 2006), 55-73
[111] All details of Oliphant's life, unless otherwise stated, are from Anne Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant 1829-1888* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)
[112] Louis Loewe (ed.), *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore, Comprising Their Life and Work as Recorded in Their Diaries from 1812 to 1883*. (London: Griffith Farran Okeden & Welsh, 1890), Vol. 2, p. 64
[113] See Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine"

states that 'Oliphant's religiosity cannot be held separate from his Christian Zionist diplomatic efforts', as noted in Chapter Six Oliphant went to some lengths to counter any accusations of religious "enthusiasm" or even Christian motivations, being behind his support for Jewish colonisation in Palestine.[114]

Oliphant's meticulous colonisation plans in *The Land of Gilead*, whilst visionary, were also hard-headed. He provided the most detailed conceptualisation of colonisation of any traveller in Palestine, a fact giving his plans their real importance. Oliphant subsequently made contact with early Zionist leaders, and his writing caused 'emigration fever' in Russia and Eastern Europe.[115] If there is any connection between Oliphant's experiences in the Brotherhood and his views on Palestine, it may be that his time in the Brotherhood's communal colonies in New York and California, introduced him to the practice of settler colonialism.[116]

After deciding upon Palestine as his next venture in the late 1870s, Oliphant secured backing for his plans from members of the British royal family, Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) and the Foreign Secretary Robert Gascoyne-Cecil (1830-1903). They supported Oliphant's idea for a Jewish colony in Palestine, backed by Britain and funded by a limited company in Europe.[117] As with Kerem Avraham's founding, the context was war between the Ottoman and Russian Empires, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. The expressed motive was not the philanthropic urge to provide for needy Jews in Palestine, but to create a British foothold in the Eastern Mediterranean, by encouraging the influx of Jews not already part of the Old *Yishuv*. Anti-Semitic pogroms in the Russian Empire, which caused a refugee crisis in the alleviation of which Oliphant was involved, gave the project a humanitarian tint.[118]

Arriving in Beirut in spring 1879, Oliphant travelled extensively in modern-day Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Jordan; he took pride in journeying off the beaten tourist track taken of 'the route prescribed by Cook'.[119] From Beirut southwards to Sidon, Oliphant travelled southeast to the Hula Valley in northern Palestine and the Jawlan; then, on the eastern bank of the Jordan (Biblical Gilead, giving the book its title) Oliphant took in the region's major towns and archaeological and Biblical sites, until

[114] Moruzzi, "Strange Bedfellows", p. 57
[115] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, p. 208
[116] In the 1880s, Oliphant was joined in Palestine by other former members of the Brotherhood who wished to settle anew. Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, his Wife* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1892), p. 336
[117] French officials were also informed of the plan. Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, pp. 192-193
[118] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, pp. 208-210
[119] Oliphant, *Haifa,* p. 121

he reached the Balqa' region, which he considered the most promising area for colonisation. Crossing the Jordan north of the Dead Sea, Oliphant then visited the typical locations in Palestine frequented by travellers.

Oliphant travelled to Damascus to discuss his scheme with Syria's Ottoman governor Midhat Pasha (1822-1883). He then went to Istanbul in May 1879, where he spent nearly a year lobbying the Ottoman court, eventually meeting Abdul Hamid himself. However, Ottoman intransience and a change in the British government in April 1880, ousting Disraeli and bringing in the anti-Ottoman Liberals, prevented the fruition of Oliphant's scheme.[120] Oliphant's failure to convince the Sultan coloured the strongly anti-Ottoman sentiments of *The Land of Gilead*, but this was far from the end of Oliphant's settler colonial designs in Palestine.

*The Land of Gilead*, published in December 1880 after Oliphant returned to England, was the literary product of his trip. What differentiated the book from other travelogues was its focus on colonisation at the heart of the narrative. In Oliphant's writing, every aspect of the land, the people, and the Ottoman government, were evaluated for how they might aid or hinder colonisation, as discussed below.

### IV.II: 'The Development of a Single Province': Planning the Gilead Colony

The Eastern Question, the threat of a Russian invasion of the Eastern Mediterranean, and the imperative of Britain to secure its interests in Palestine, hang heavily over the first pages of Oliphant's book. Its author claimed his primary concern was to prevent 'an external interference in the domestic affairs of Turkey, of a more pronounced character than had ever existed before'. Oliphant advocated what he called the 'decentralisation' of the Ottoman provinces, using an economic argument to justify 'the development of a single province, however small, under conditions which should increase the revenue of the empire, add to its population and resources, secure protection of life and property, and enlist the sympathy of Europe, without in any way affecting the sovereign rights of the Sultan'. Oliphant continued, claiming the land he coveted was unpopulated, that this 'might be attained by means of a Colonisation Company, and […] one of those rich and unoccupied districts which abound in Turkey

[120] On the election of 1880 and Britain's Ottoman policy, see Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, pp. 69-70

might be obtained and developed through the agency of a commercial enterprise'. This company, similar to outfits proposed by other travellers, particularly Warren, would be sponsored by the Sultan, but draw its capital from Europe.

Who should populate this colony? Oliphant discounted European Christians and Muslim refugees from the Balkans, then turned to the Jews – not Jews 'from England or France, but from European and Asiatic Turkey itself' and the Russian Empire 'where they are more especially oppressed'. Oliphant discounted the Old *Yishuv* already in Palestine, as they formed 'a mendicant class'. Countering the common notion 'that the Jews are not agriculturists, and that any attempt to develop the agricultural resources of a country through their instrumentality must result in failure', Oliphant cited instances of successful Jewish farming in Palestine and around the world, adding that the Jews' 'early history testifies that no such objection to a rural life existed in former days', i.e. in the ancient Biblical period. Yet Oliphant did not see Jews doing the physical work of farming, at least initially, but forming instead a landowning class of 'Hebrew capitalists' in the colony.[121] Ironically, given Oliphant's status as forefather of Zionist colonisation, his plan precluded *'avodah Ivrit* (Hebrew: Hebrew labour) and Jewish self-help and self-sufficiency, key to Zionist ideology in later decades, and which was already practiced in embryonic form at Kerem Avraham.[122]

After outlining his plan, Oliphant reproduced a letter in the *Jewish Chronicle* in September 1880, from a 'Society for the Colonisation of the Holy Land' in Bucharest, painting a vivid picture of the oppression of Jews in Romania – 'a land whose princes are like the wolves of the forest, in their endeavour to annihilate the children of Israel' – and begging funds from British Jews to help families emigrate to Palestine.[123] Oliphant responded to this group, his first contact with the organised Zionist movement, this involvement later making him 'known to Jews all over Europe, as news of his advice was reported in all the Hebrew papers'.[124] By quoting a Jewish witness to persecution, and the Jews' own willingness to become colonists, Oliphant further legitimised his project. Oliphant vowed his project was not motivated by Christian concerns, such as the conversion of the Jews, allowing him to appear more in

[121] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. xiv, xv, xxi, xxiii, xxv, xxvi
[122] For more on the ideology of Hebrew labour in the Zionist movement, see Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, pp. 145-146; Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate* (London: Abacus, 2001), pp. 256-258, 285
[123] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. xxvii-xxviii
[124] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, pp. 199-200

sympathy with the Jews' own interests; Oliphant's associate and translator Sokolow wrote approvingly that his words were 'particularly worthy of the attention of those who, ignorant of the actual facts, are inclined to represent Zionism merely as a theological or sectarian idea'.[125]

Oliphant presented more detailed plans in the tenth chapter of his book.[126] Oliphant listed the colony's forecasted agricultural produce, including an array of fruits and vegetables, cereals, olive oil, wine, cotton, silk and tobacco, farmed for export. While Kerem Avraham had adopted agricultural methods similar to indigenous farming with a few European improvements, Oliphant envisioned commercial farming on an industrial scale. In addition, he was enthusiastic about the possibilities offered by the Dead Sea, writing that if it was included within the colony, it would 'furnish a vast source of wealth, by the *exploitation* of its chemical and mineral deposits'. While most travellers related to the Dead Sea as a Biblical site and an interesting geographical feature, Oliphant saw opportunity in its briny waters.

Oliphant also returned to the question of labour for the colony. He identified four possible sources of labour, paid either in wages or a share of the colony's produce: 'sedentary Arab tribes' glad to obtain work under the 'favourable conditions which they would obtain from emigrant farmers and capitalists'; the *fellahin* 'who would flock over in numbers to obtain employment, where they would live under the protection of a just and lenient Government'; refugees from the Balkans (Bulgaria's functional independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1878 was followed by the emigration of some Bulgarian Muslims) whom Oliphant thought 'would probably bring a greater degree of intelligence and experience to bear upon their operations that the peasant of Palestine'; finally, Oliphant considered the possibility 'that some of the more wealthy Jewish proprietors would endeavour to encourage a spirit of agricultural industry among the needy of their own race, and that by degrees poor Hebrew emigrants might be trained to labour upon the soil'.[127]

Whilst the colony's land would be owned and administered by Jewish immigrants, Oliphant envisaged a heterogeneous workforce, Jews most likely

[125] Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, p. 209
[126] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 284-304
[127] Earlier on his journey, at Quneitra in the Jawlan, Oliphant had encountered a community of Circassians from Bulgaria who 'were evidently engaged in the first stage of building a village for themselves'. Whilst admitting that 'it is not improbable that many of them took some share in the "atrocities"' after Ottoman forces suppressed a nationalist uprising in Bulgaria in 1876, Oliphant called their community an 'interesting experiment in colonisation'. *Land of Gilead*, p. 45

outnumbered by labourers employed from among the Bedouin, local *fellahin* and European Muslim immigrants. Once again, this put him at odds with later Zionist ideology. Zionist immigrants, particularly those of the Second *Aliyah*, took pride in not using non-Jewish labour, creating a "pure settlement colony". As Norman Bentwich (1883-1971), British Zionist and Attorney-General in Mandate Palestine, wrote, 'it was not enough for the Jews to return to the soil and live on it. They must redeem it by the work of their own hands and not by directing the work of others'.[128]

This Hebrew labour concept persisted until 1967, when the occupation of the Gaza Strip and West Bank provided Israel with a large Palestinian workforce for industries within Israel and settlements in the Palestinian territories, who could be exploited at much lower rates of pay than Jewish workers.[129] By comparison, Oliphant's division of labour between Jewish landowners and administrators and native and refugee labour, more resembles metropolitan colonialism than the course the Zionist movement would take over the next decades. As with other traveller-writers, settler and metropolitan colonialisms were mixed in Oliphant's vision.

In the final chapter, Oliphant argued for his colony from the standpoint of political expediency, addressing himself to the British establishment.[130] His arguments were shaped by his failure to convince the Sultan, leaving him bitter towards the Ottomans.[131] Oliphant argued that by supporting Jewish colonial efforts in Palestine, a European power could win the support of Jews, a community with 'financial, political, and commercial' importance, a valuable ally for 'a nation likely to be engaged in a European war'. Oliphant's belief in the importance of the Jews was later echoed by David Lloyd George, justifying Britain's pro-Zionist policies by stressing the political benefits of Britain's 'contract with Jewry' in his memoirs.[132] The belief in Jews' mysterious power, and an inflated view of their financial and political influence, are anti-Semitic tropes; in the words of Regina Sharif, this was an example of 'Zionism and anti-Semitism operat[ing] on the same plane, complementing and reinforcing each other'.[133]

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[128] Norman Bentwich, *Fulfilment in the Promised Land, 1917-1937* (London: The Soncino Press, 1938), p. 24
[129] 'To use the Biblical phrase, Israel turned the people of Gaza into the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, into a source of cheap labour and a captive market for Israeli goods.' Avi Shlaim, "How Israel brought Gaza to the brink of humanitarian catastrophe", *Guardian* (7 January 2009), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jan/07/gaza-israel-palestine (accessed 30/07/17)
[130] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 502-524
[131] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, p. 198
[132] Segev, *One Palestine, Complete*, p. 38
[133] Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 121

Oliphant restated the necessity of preserving the Ottoman Empire's formal integrity, i.e. preserving it against Russian expansionism, by the decentralisation of its provinces, particularly Armenia and Syria (the latter including all the areas that he had travelled through). He saw the Russian conquest of Jerusalem as an imminent threat,

> unless we take steps to avert the danger by insuring to Palestine a degree of independence under the rule of the Sultan which should carry with it the sympathy and approbation, and therefore the indirect protection, of European Powers, and so prevent it from becoming the object of a Russian religious crusade. It would probably be found impossible to solve the Eastern problem in any other way […]

Oliphant cited Lebanon as an example of what could be done in Palestine, 'either by England alone, or jointly with any European power willing to co-operate'. The Jewish colonists, whilst drawing the support of the world's Jews to Britain, were ultimately incidental to Britain's interest in achieving a foothold in Palestine. However, at the end of *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant sought to harmonise the interests of the Jews with British interests, drawing upon Britain's role as perceived protector of the Jews:

> The population of Palestine in particular, of which 25,000 belong to the Hebrew race, is looking to England for protection and the redress of grievances; and those who see in the relations which our own country now occupies towards the Holy Land, the hand of Providence, may fairly consider whether they do not involve responsibilities which cannot lightly be ignored.

Ensuring his plan was wholly separated from the religious aspects of Evangelical proto-Zionism, and the Finns' brand of paternalism, Oliphant presented the Gilead colony as politically expedient, practicable, and supported by Jews. He continued this rhetoric of persuasion when proposing the location of the colony.

### IV.III: 'To the Limit of the Good Land': Locating the Colony

Oliphant identified in the introduction the sites he envisaged for colonisation: 'the luxuriant pasture-lands of Jaulan, the magnificent forest-clad mountains of Gilead, the

rich arable plains of Moab, and the fervid subtropical valley of the Jordan'.[134] This area, southwards from the Jawlan mountains, lay mainly in "Eastern Palestine"; like other travellers as discussed in Chapter Nine, over a range of criteria Oliphant displayed a marked preference for the east of the Jordan River. His plan for settlement there was warmly received by Zionists, including the Hebrew revivalist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda who supported the plan until Oliphant failed to convince the Ottomans.[135] Decades later, Sokolow still claimed that 'the plains of the *Hauran*, the villages of the *Jordan*, and the land of *Gilead* would form one of the richest and largest food-producing areas in the world'.[136] None of these areas were ever significantly colonised by Zionists, and none were included within the State of Israel's borders in 1948. Only the Jawlan and the western side of the Jordan Valley, the West Bank, were militarily occupied in 1967, and soon after opened to Israeli settlers. In the late Ottoman era, one Jewish settlement was established in the Jawlan, Beth or Bene Yehuda. The colony was founded in 1886 east of the Sea of Galilee, by Jews from Safad who moved there, according to Hyamson, 'on the suggestion of Laurence Oliphant'.[137] Oliphant wrote to one Zionist settler that the Beth Yehuda colony would turn 'into agriculturists natives of the country who have hitherto lived on the Haluka'. Oliphant called the colony 'the best experiment of the kind which exists in Palestine'.[138] The settlement survived for several decades, but was disbanded in the early years of the British Mandate.

Oliphant claimed the region he identified was 'eminently adapted for colonisation by a people accustomed to a European climate', and that 'the climate is eminently adapted for the cultivation of all descriptions of English farm and garden produce in its higher altitudes'.[139] Oliphant described the exact dimensions of his colony:

> The region which I should propose for settlement, in the first instance, would be the entire district of the Belka, from the Arnon [River] on the south, to the Jabbok [River] on the north, extending eastwards as far as the Hadj road, or at all events to the limit of the good land, and, if necessary, including such portions of the province of Ajlun to the north

[134] Olipant, *Land of Gilead*, p. xxxvi
[135] Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, & the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), pp. 64-65
[136] Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, p. xxiii
[137] Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, op. cit., p. 157
[138] Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant*, p. 391
[139] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 186-187, 194. It is perhaps worth noting that Oliphant visited the region in early spring, after the winter rainfall, when the land would appear at its most fertile.

> of the Jabbok, as might be deemed the most desirable – making a tract of at least a million, or possibly a million and a half acres. The western boundary would be the Jordan and the western shore of the Dead Sea, thus including that singular sheet of water within its limits.

Oliphant claimed this region was especially suitable to colonisation partly because it had a low population. He asserted that the area was largely 'free from Arabs', and with no settled population except the inhabitants of the town of Salt, which 'would have to be dealt with separately', a euphemism discussed below.[140] This was a huge area, far larger than any coterminous area which the Zionist movement was able to purchase in Palestine before 1948. Rather than colonising a large area, the Zionist movement west of the Jordan adopted a strategy of gradual settlement through piecemeal land purchases – in a Zionist slogan 'another dunam, another goat' – with the settlements often isolated from each other and neighboured by Palestinian villages.[141] Oliphant's plan closer resembled the administrative divisions of the colonies populated by Anglo-Saxon Protestant settlers, such as in North America and Australia where in the terms of Frederick Turner (applied to Palestine by Baruch Kimmerling) there was 'high frontierity' and availability of cheap land, rather than Zionist settler colonialism in Palestine, a small and (despite some travellers' assertion to the contrary) relatively densely populated and highly cultivated region with low frontierity.[142] Oliphant's Balqa' was conceptualised as an area epitomising high frontierity.

Oliphant included a map of the colony, indicating the railway lines he planned to serve it (fig. 11.6). The railway terminals revealed Oliphant's thoughts on the most important locations in the Eastern Mediterranean. 'The western section of the colony', Oliphant wrote, 'would be within an easy day's journey from Jerusalem, from which city in the early stages of development supplies and necessaries could be drawn; but the true outlet for its produce would be the port of Haifa'. Also connected to the rail network were the ports of 'Aqaba and of Ismailia on the Suez Canal, thus furnishing 'an alternative route to India' for the British, and Damascus. He conceded that 'it might

[140] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 288-291

[141] A dunam (a unit of measurement across the Ottoman Empire) was an area of 1000 square metres. 'Another dunam, another goat' is a paraphrase of the Zionist leader and first Israeli President Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952), who wrote in 1930 of the early Zionist movement's strategy of 'another dunam and another dunam, another Jew and another Jew, another cow and another goat and two more houses in Gederah'. Zeev Drory, Eyal Lewin and Eyal Ben-Ari, "Kibbutz Under Fire: Back to the Days of Sickle and Bayonet", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Special Section: Religion and Ethnicity (Summer 2017), 121-144, p. 143

[142] Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology: Internal and External Comparisons", *Journal of Historical Sociology* Vol. 6, No. 3 (September 1993), 327-350, p. 334

also be deemed desirable [...] to have a short branch or tramway by way of tramway of Jericho to Jerusalem', for the purpose of 'bring[ing] the latter city to within five or six hours' distance of the port of Haifa by rail'. Oliphant's words are strongly reminiscent of those of the Zionist sociologist and official Arthur Ruppin (1876-1943), described by Gabriel Piterberg as 'perhaps the single most important individual for the Zionist settlement in Palestine', especially during and after the Second *Aliyah*. In a letter to the Zionist Executive, Ruppin stated 'for systematic colonization to work we need large contiguous areas, not too far from the harbours and railroads'.[143] Oliphant initially believed that the only contiguous areas of land available were east of the Jordan, but was determined that a colony there would enjoy excellent transport connections to ports. Around the same time as Oliphant, the British industrialist Edward Cazalet (1827-1883) devised a plan for Jewish settlers to construct a railway from Palestine to the Euphrates under British direction, which would 'afford immediate occupation for thousands of emigrants and at the same time assume the permanence of the British protectorate'.[144] After the failure of his Gilead colony, Oliphant continued to advocate for the construction of railways in the region, travelling to Alexandria in 1883 to lobby for a railway from Haifa to Damascus under British control.[145]

Oliphant's consideration of Haifa's importance for his colony echoed other traveller-writers' opinions the town, as discussed in Chapter Ten. To Oliphant, Haifa was a port with great potential, unlike Jerusalem which he denigrated in his travelogue. While the Finns hoped with Kerem Avraham to solidify Jewish life in Jerusalem, Oliphant's colony would have drawn Jews away from Jerusalem and the holy cities, towards the colony east of the Jordan and the railway terminals connecting it to the outside world, particularly Haifa. This represented a shift from the old approach of Evangelicals to Jewish colonisation couched in prophetic religious doctrine, towards greater concern for the colonies' durability and commercial success – the 'scientific Zionism' identified by Regina Sharif. A vision similar to Oliphant's was shared by Herzl in his 1902 novel *Altneuland*, in which Haifa in a future Jewish-colonised Palestine was 'a magnificent city […] built beside the sapphire-blue Mediterranean', with 'craft

[143] Gabriel Piterberg, "The Zionist Colonization of Palestine in the Context of Comparative Settler-Colonialism" in Rochelle Davis and Mimi Kirk, *Palestine and the Palestinians in the 21st Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 15-31, pp. 26,30

[144] Hyamson, "British Projects for the Restoration of Jews to Palestine", p. 162. Cazalet corresponded with Oliphant on the subject of Jewish colonisation. Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant*, p. 317

[145] Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant*, p. 337

of every shape and size, flying the flags of all the nations' in its harbour.[146] Yet Oliphant's thought also closely anticipated later Zionist thought and practice in darker ways.


**Figure 11.6:**
**"A Map Showing the Proposed Railways and site of the Proposed Colony",**
***The Land of Gilead* by Laurence Oliphant,**
**facing page 302**

[146] Theodor Herzl, *Old New Land* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1960 [1902]), p. 58

## IV.IV: 'A Firm Hand Upon the Arabs': Oliphant and Ethnic Cleansing

Oliphant's choice of the east of the Jordan rested on his perception of the lack of a significant population in the area. His account abounded with descriptions of a land almost entirely uninhabited, and fertile land going to waste from lack of cultivation, tribal raids and Ottoman administrative incompetence. Gilead itself was 'except by a few wandering Arabs uninhabited, and consequently totally uncultivated, waiting, let us hope, to be reoccupied by the descendants of the same race which once pastured their flocks in their luxuriant valleys'. The Moab region, also included in the colony's prospective borders, was 'without doubt, the finest territory for agricultural and pastoral purposes in the whole of Palestine, while it is the only province where there are no legal occupiers of the soil, and no settled population'. Mentioning one sedentary farmer, a local Protestant convert, Oliphant claimed he was the only house-dweller in the entire area, excepting the inhabitants of the town of Salt.[147]

Oliphant's conception of the Balqa' region was illustrated on his book's cover (fig. 11.7) with symbolism not lost on the work's reviewer in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Above a mountainous and totally deserted landscape, the Islamic crescent moon and star sank low in the sky, symbolising the decline of both the religion of the Arab tribes and their way of life in the face of progress. Above this rose the constellation of *Ursa Major*, the Great Bear representing the threat of the Russian bear in the Eastern Question.[148] Higher still was a star, its rays forming a cross, somewhat contradicting Oliphant's disavowal of any Christian content in his plan, but perhaps standing for the European powers Oliphant hoped would sponsor the settlement enterprise.

By contrast, Oliphant wrote of 'Western Palestine' that 'the few fertile spots which exist are already under cultivation by the resident population'. Oliphant noted that comparatively little land was state owned and therefore could not be sold easily to colonists; ultimately the density of the indigenous population would mean that a colony 'would not be susceptible of the same administrative autonomy as the unoccupied country to the east of the Jordan'.[149]

[147] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 188, 269, 271
[148] Anonymous, "The Land of Gilead.", *Pall Mall Gazette* (19 January 1881), p. 11
[149] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 284, 335

**Figure 11.7:**
**Cover image,**
***The Land of Gilead* by Laurence Oliphant**

Yet ‘Eastern Palestine’ was not totally uninhabited, and Oliphant admitted that the presence of Bedouin tribes in the area was a problem. Early in *The Land of Gilead*, Oliphant assessed how different tribes might react to the colonists. The Mandhur of the Yarmuk Valley south of the Sea of Galilee were ‘a peaceful tribe much given to agricultural pursuits, and could be easily dealt with’ through ‘black-mail’, to allow ‘enterprising capitalists’ to develop hot springs into tourist attractions. Alternately, the Bani Sakhr were ‘a more dangerous foe […] who, however, have no prescriptive right to the valley, and who could easily be kept in check, if it were not thought desirable to pay them, by the police and military force at the disposal of the Caimakam [Ottoman governor] at Irbid’ (the colony would continue to rely on Ottoman forces for its security). As discussed in Chapter Seven, Oliphant viewed the Druze in particular as potential allies. As for the Bani Sakhr, however, Oliphant recommended their outright expulsion:

they were 'invaders, who should be driven back across the Hadj road, where a small *cordon* of soldiers, posted in the forts which now exist upon it, would be sufficient to keep them in check'.[150] Oliphant's dichotomy between "good" and "bad" sections of the indigenous population, who could collaborate with colonisers or would have to be dealt with forcefully, was echoed in the Zionist movement's relation to the indigenous population. As analysed by Hillel Cohen, during the British Mandate the Zionist movement cultivated relationships with some Palestinians, particularly traditional leaders, often to help with the procurement of land.[151]

Oliphant expected that even "good" Arabs, permitted to continue living in the colonised area, would have to change their lifestyles for harmonious coexistence with the settlers. As the Finns' hoped for Jews' reformation through work and farming, Oliphant hoped for changes in the indigenous population through the influence of European capitalism. He claimed with satisfaction that the Bedouin were 'imperceptibly acquiring commercial instincts, for nothing civilises a man so rapidly as teaching him to borrow money and run into debt'. He further argued that to 'stimulate the Moslem to devote his whole energies to preying upon his neighbour, and […] increase his greed for money and his necessities generally', was the only way to modernise and thus save the Ottoman Empire. Another aspect of Oliphant's plan was 'the abolition of the Hadj', Oliphant blaming the Muslim pilgrimage passing through the area for providing tribes in the area with opportunities for robbery.[152] With Orientalist arrogance, Oliphant believed that the 'abolition' of one of Islam's key tenets would be possible for a colonial force to achieve.

For the undesirable among the native population, there were more sinister remedies. Oliphant recommended the use of 'a firm hand upon the Arabs', claiming that 'wherever it has been tried it has succeeded'. The course of action Oliphant advocated against 'the Arabs' (meaning the nomadic Bedouin) amounted to ethnic cleansing. He insisted that 'the Arabs have very little claim to our sympathy' for their supposed role as raiders in preventing effective farming from occurring, and that 'if they were driven back to the Arabian deserts from which they came, there is abundant pasture in its oases for their camels and goats'. Oliphant expected this would be easily

[150] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 139, 286
[151] Hillel Cohen, *Army of Shadows: Palestinian Collaboration with Zionism, 1917–1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008)
[152] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 201, 465, 123

accomplished, writing of the Bedouin in the Jordan valley that 'there would be no difficulty in clearing them out'.[153]

In advocating these solutions, Oliphant closely anticipated Zionist thought on the indigenous Palestinians, and the actual ethnic cleansing of Palestine which took place during the *Nakba* of 1948.[154] Nur Masalha has found that the 'transfer' of the Palestinians was an increasingly prominent part of Zionist discourse. The right-wing Revisionist Zionist Eliahu Ben-Horin (1902-1966), for instance, wrote in the 1940s in terms similar to Oliphant's:

> The Palestinian Arabs will not be removed to a foreign land but to an Arab land. […] If the transfer and the colonization project are well planned and systematically carried out, the Palestinian fellah will get better soil and more promising life conditions than he can ever expect to obtain in Palestine.[155]

Oliphant also advocated the removal of "good" tribes, and their resettlement in much smaller designated areas or reserves. 'In the event of [the Balqa'] becoming occupied by a settled population', Oliphant wrote, 'special tracts could be reserved in case they should elect to remain in the country, and adopt sedentary habits'. He drew on other settler colonial contexts for inspiration, writing 'the same system might be pursued which we have adopted with success in Canada with our North American Indian tribes, who are confined to their "reserves," and live peaceably upon them in the midst of the settled agricultural population'.[156] The movement of First Nations into reservations in Canada had begun before the British colony gained self-government in 1867, and was continuing as Oliphant wrote in 1880. Underlying this policy was an assumption that 'the reserve was the place where the Indian could be "civilized," meaning Christianised, educated, and be made a farmer'.[157]

Oliphant unknowingly witnessed the beginning of the dispossession of the Palestinian *fellahin*. After leaving the Balqa', Oliphant travelled through the Marj ibn 'Amer region in the lower Galilee. Oliphant paid attention to the activities of 'Mr Sursuk' or Sursuq, a Lebanese banker, who in 1872 purchased agricultural land including,

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[153] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 183, 205, 285, 292-293
[154] See Pappe, *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*
[155] Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of 'Transfer' in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948* (Berkeley: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992), p. 162
[156] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 205, 286
[157] J.L. Tobias, "Indian Reserves in Western Canada: Indian Homelands or Devices for Assimilation?" in Bruce Alden Cox (ed.), *Native People, Native Lands: Canadian Indians, Inuit and Metis* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 148-157, p. 148

according to Oliphant, over 20 villages inhabited by 4,000 peasants. Oliphant records approvingly on how 'the Arabs [Bedouin] have been driven out' of the area, proving 'how easy the Arabs really are to deal with', and how profitable the land has become through Sursuq's harnessing of the labour of the peasants, who were effectively 'his absolute dependants and slaves'.[158] Later, from 1901 to 1925, the Sursuq family sold this land to the Zionist movement, and 8,730 villagers were evicted from their land.[159]

## IV.V: 'The Foundations of Zionism That Are Here': Oliphant, the Zionist Movement and the State of Israel

*The Land of Gilead* was received with interest in the British press, which recognised it as no mere Holy Land travelogue. Some reviewers, aware of Oliphant's unorthodox life experiences, viewed the work partly as the creation of an eccentric mind. The *Pall Mall Gazette* described the book as 'the oddest and most original book of the season', adding that 'never was a stranger potpourri of politics and prophecy, Blue-books, and Holy Writ served up to tickle the palate'. Similarly, the *Daily News* likened Oliphant's colonisation plan to older forms of Christian proto-Zionist belief, already viewed as semi-heretical forms of "enthusiasm" by mainstream Evangelicals. 'On the face of it', the reviewer wrote, 'the thing looked so much like Millenarianism or Lost-Ten-Tribes-ism or Anglo-Judaism, or one of the myriad of other crazes which the chosen people have suggested to imaginative Christians, that a certain amount of ridicule seemed to attach to it'; the writer also noted that Oliphant was 'known as a man at least as eccentric as he is clever'.[160] Yet the *Pall Mall*'s reviewer also recognised the book as 'a political work of considerable importance': in a travel genre which had been 'done to death by hordes of note-taking authors, from Burckhardt to Mark Twain', *The Land of Gilead* stood out for containing both 'the testimony of a clear-seeing Englishman as to the present state of one of the most important provinces of Asiatic Turkey', and 'a scheme of colonization which may possibly effect a great and beneficial change in the East'.[161] The reviewer for the *Examiner* claimed that, as a travel narrative, 'the book is as commonplace a volume of travels as we have lately seen', yet in other respects it

[158] Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, pp. 330-332
[159] Mazen Qumsiyeh, *Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment* (London: Pluto Press, 2011), pp. 41, 60
[160] Anonymous, "Attentive readers of their newspapers", *Daily News* (17 December 1880), p. 5
[161] Anonymous, "The Land of Gilead."

was ‘a volume as remarkable as its author’. Oliphant’s colonisation plan, as well as anti-Semitic persecution in the Russian Empire, led the reviewer to state, without verification, that ‘if […] the Hebrew race were polled, there is no doubt that a large majority would declare in favour of an emigration upon reasonable conditions to the land between the Great Sea and the Great River’.[162]

Oliphant’s colonisation plan indeed won him fame in early Zionist circles around Europe; *The Land of Gilead* sold well in its early Hebrew translation by Sokolow.[163] Initially bitter at his plan’s failure, Oliphant remained committed to the Jewish colonisation of Palestine; later, he became more reflective of the opportunities the end of his initial plan created for him. In his 1882 article “The Jew and the Eastern Question”, Oliphant mused that ‘by the light of current events – which may reopen the Eastern Question under conditions so pregnant with momentous results – I am thankful to be relieved from the responsibility which success would have entailed, and cannot but regard the delay which has resulted from my failure upon that occasion as providential’. These ‘current events’ included the anti-Semitic pogroms in the Russian Empire which, Oliphant wrote, led to a huge upswing in the number of Jews wishing to emigrate to Palestine: he claimed to have been ‘overwhelmed with a correspondence and addresses, containing over ten thousand signatures’. Whereas Oliphant on his *Gilead* journey had noted the population and cultivation of Palestine, now he claimed, in settler-colonial fashion, that ‘in Mesopotamia, North Syria, and some of the southern provinces of Asia Minor, immense tracts of fertile unoccupied land exist, capable of maintaining the whole Jewish population of Russia’.[164]

In March 1882, he became a member of the Mansion House Committee formed in London as a result of the refugee crisis following the pogroms, and travelled to Eastern Europe. During his trip, Oliphant met several important early Zionist leaders; when he resigned from the Committee, partly because it facilitated Jewish emigration to North America rather than Palestine, he threw himself into working closely with the Zionist settlers of the First *Aliyah*. Oliphant was mainly based in northern Palestine with his wife Alice and their Western followers, until shortly before his death in 1888, making dedication to Zionism the last of his life’s many projects.

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[162] Anonymous, “The Restoration of the Jews”, *Examiner* (25 December 1880), p. 1433
[163] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, p. 217
[164] Laurence Oliphant, “The Jew and the Eastern Question”, *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, Vol. 12, No. 66 (August 1882), 242-255, pp. 253, 250

Among Oliphant's practical achievements was supporting Romanian Zionist settlers by discovering the legal loophole by which they could remain in Palestine without applying for Ottoman citizenship. He also proved effective in raising sums of money from British Evangelicals, funding Zionist settlements such as Beth Yehuda and Rosh Pina in the Galilee.[165] Hyamson credited Oliphant's fundraising with introducing Zionism to Edmond James de Rothschild (1845-1934), who would become the key patron of the early Zionist colonies in Palestine.[166] Subsequent travellers in Palestine represented Oliphant as the philanthropic benefactor of Jewish immigrants, without whom their colonisation efforts may have failed. 'The case of the Roumanian Jews', wrote F.R. Oliphant, a member of Oliphant's Scottish clan,

> who were sent out here by the Jewish Colonising Society of their country, and who, finding no preparations made to receive them, were left upon the streets of Haifa, homeless, penniless, and starving, till Laurence Oliphant took them up, maintaining the whole number at his own expense till satisfactory arrangements could be made for the establishment of the colony, is one of the best known cases.[167]

Another admirer described Oliphant as 'ever ready to hold out the hand of friendship to the poor wandering Jews who landed forlorn strangers in the land of their fathers'.[168]

Much of Oliphant's later reputation in Israel, discussed below, is owed to his employment as secretary of Naphtali Herz Imber (1856-1909), author of the poem which would become the words to the Israeli national anthem "HaTikvah".[169] Since Oliphant's death, his canonisation by the Zionist movement and Israeli state has revealed the extent of Israel's debt to this nineteenth century writer and colonist. Oliphant's memorialisation in Israel in museums and landmarks, urban topography and numerous forms of media, continuing until the present, is unparalleled by any other traveller to Palestine in the late Ottoman period.

Oliphant's cult began during his life, winning adherents among both Zionist immigrants and Western travellers who followed in his footsteps. In his homes in Haifa and Daliat al-Karmel, he played host to several members of the British Imperial

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[165] Thomas Amit, "Laurence Oliphant: Financial Sources for his Activities in Palestine in the 1880s", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, Vol. 139, No. 3 (2007), 205-212
[166] Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, p. 115
[167] F.R. Oliphant, *Notes of a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land* (London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1891), p. 85
[168] Maude M. Holbach, *Bible Ways in Bible Lands: An Impression of Palestine* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1912), p. 16
[169] Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant*, pp. 206-213

establishment, including Charles Gordon in 1883, and Mountstuart Grant Duff (1829-1906), a colonial administrator in London and Governor of Madras, in 1887.[170] 'Not a few travellers with names famous in Europe, made a detour to visit that idyllic home where the Oliphants lived', noted a traveller; this trend continued after Oliphant's death, his houses effectively becoming shrines.[171]

Oliphant's second wife, Rosamond Dale Owen (1846-1937) whom he married in Britain shortly before his death, attempted to secure the rights to areas of land in northern Palestine, including the Biblical site of Megiddo (Armageddon), for agricultural colonisation. This was an epic legal struggle spanning, according to her obituary in the *Palestine Post*, 47 years into the 1930s, involving 25 journeys to Palestine and costing her £18,000 until all she left to her adopted son (like Oliphant, she had a deeply repressed attitude to sexuality) was £1000. She boasted in her deeply strange memoir that she was 'Mrs. Laurence Oliphant, the owner of Armageddon'. Simultaneously aptly and ironically, given Oliphant's enthusiasm for connecting Haifa with rail, one of the sites Owen claimed – apparently owned by Oliphant, but requisitioned by the Ottoman government after his death – was occupied by the Haifa railway station built in 1904. An interesting insight into Oliphant's attitude to land purchase for colonisation is found in the claim that another plot Owen sought had belonged to a Palestinian village; Oliphant had assisted the villagers in paying their heavy Ottoman taxes, but had bargained for a fifth of their lands in return.[172] Echoing earlier travellers' calls for colonisation, and closely anticipating the Sykes-Picot Agreement, she authored pamphlets in the 1890s calling for Palestine to become 'an International Republic', apparently 'a plan warmly desired by the Arabs', so Palestine's resources could be 'used for the Commonwealth'. Frances Emily Newton (1871-1955), a British missionary who lived in Palestine for 50 years until 1938, purchased Oliphant's house in Daliat al-Karmel from Owen; though Newton strongly opposed Zionism, she still regarded residence in this house as a badge of honour.[173]

Oliphant has also been commemorated by Zionist and Israeli officials and institutions of the Israeli state. In 1929, the centenary of Oliphant's birth was marked

[170] For Gordon's visit, see *Haifa*, pp. 274-280; Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary, 1886-1888* (London: John Murray, 1900), p. 247
[171] Holbach, *Bible Ways in Bible Lands*, p. 16
[172] Anonymous, "50 Years' Litigation: Late Mrs. Oliphant's Haifa Claim", *The Palestine Post* (30 June 1937), p. 4
[173] Rosamond Dale Owen, *My Perilous Life in Palestine* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1928) pp. 281, 342-343; Frances Emily Newton, *Fifty Years in Palestine* (London: Coldharbour Press, 1948)

by the Zionist press in Palestine and a public meeting in Haifa.[174] His death centenary too was marked, in 1988, with a ceremony held by the Women's International Zionist Organisation in Oliphant's house in Daliat al-Karmel, to which the head of the Oliphant Clan Association was invited.[175] There are today Oliphant Streets in Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv (the first two at least were named after Oliphant during the Mandate), and an additional Oliphant Street in Katzrin, an Israeli settlement founded in 1977 in the occupied Golan Heights.[176] The latter was an apt tribute to one who dreamed of Jewish colonisation in the Jawlan, expelling the indigenous population if deemed necessary.

The house in Daliat al-Karmel was purchased by the Israeli state in the late 1970s and turned into a memorial for the Druze soldiers killed during service in the Israel Defence Forces (the Druze, unlike other Palestinian citizens of Israel, are required to perform military service in the IDF).[177] This too was apt, combining Oliphant's admiration for the Druze and belief in their martial abilities with a Zionist propagandistic function for the Israeli state. During a Druze religious holiday in 2013, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the site, speaking of the supposed connection between the Druze and Israel (challenged by, among other factors relating to the marginalisation of the Druze community in Israel, Druze citizens' opposition to the 2018 Nation State Law sponsored by Netanyahu's government).[178] Netanyahu declared Oliphant's home a national heritage site, stating this was 'because of the foundations of Zionism that are here, the support of Christian Zionists like Sir Laurence Oliphant, and his secretary, Naftali Herz Imber, who wrote Hatikva here, in this very place'. Netanyahu claimed that the building – which even Oliphant admitted had 'a somewhat pretentious castellated roof, a generally unfinished appearance, and suggestions of landscape-gardening not altogether in keeping with the native surroundings' – constructed in the 1880s by the eccentric British traveller, had 'very deep roots' in the country.[179]

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[174] Anonymous: "Palestine Marks Centenary of Laurence Oliphant", *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (19 August 1929)
[175] Ya'acov Friedler, "All Honour to Oliphant", *The Jerusalem Post* (30 March 1988), p. 2
[176] Wendy Blumfield, "Streetwise: Rehov Oliphant, Haifa" *The Jerusalem Post* (15 May 2008), http://www.jpost.com/Magazine/Streetwise-Rehov-Oliphant-Haifa (accessed on 01/08/17); Haim Watzman, "The Outpost on Oliphant Street", *The Jerusalem Post* (25 July 2016), http://www.jpost.com/jerusalem-report/the-outpost-on-oliphant-street-462301 (accessed on 01/08/17)
[177] Daliat al-Karmel Town Council, "Bet Oliphant", http://www.daliat-carmel.org.il/tour/Pages/bet-olefant.aspx (accessed on 03/08/17) (in Hebrew)
[178] See Yara Hawari, "The Druze and the nation-state bill", *Al Jazeera* (16 August 2018), https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/druze-nation-state-bill-180816125453184.html (accessed on 04/09/2019)
[179] Netanyahu's reference to 'Sir Laurence Oliphant' is inaccurate, as Oliphant was never knighted. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "PM Netanyahu visits Druze on Nabi Shueib holiday" (25 April 2013), https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2013/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-vsits-Druze-on-Nabi-Shueib-holiday-25-Apr-

An exhibition of Alice Oliphant's paintings, 'Alice in the Holyland' (sic) was held in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem from 2003 to 2004.[180] The Oliphants are also commemorated in the Friends of Zion Museum in West Jerusalem, an institution dedicated to non-Jewish Zionists and presenting a positive view of Israel (according to its website, it 'serves as a platform for fighting BDS', the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign for Palestinian rights) established in 2015.[181] Portraits of Laurence and Alice Oliphant feature prominently in a display of 'visionaries', both physically within the museum and virtually on the museum's website (fig. 11.8). Another webpage on the museum's website celebrates Oliphant's role in the composition of "HaTikvah".[182] This sanitised presentation of Oliphant's contribution to settler colonialism in Palestine feeds perfectly into the museum's simplistic narrative of decades of Western Christians' supporting role to Jews seeking to re-establish an ancestral homeland.

Oliphant's own works have been republished in Israel, with endorsements from political figures. Oliphant's *Haifa* was republished (in English) in a lavish Israeli edition in 1976, complete with illustrations originally from other travelogues. The subtitle of the book was changed from the original *Life in Modern Palestine* to *Life in the Holy Land*, reflecting not only Zionism's effort to erase the name of Palestine, but also a denial that modernity could have existed in Palestine before the arrival of settler colonialism. Most significantly, the edition included an introduction from Rehavam Ze'evi (1926-2001), an IDF major-general and founder of the far-right Moledet Party and the tourism minister in 2001 before his assassination by Palestinian militants. In his introduction, Ze'evi credited Oliphant with being 'one of the great instigators of the Jewish movement for the Return to Zion and the resettlement of the Land'.[183] Ze'evi was an appropriate choice to introduce Oliphant's text: some of his extreme political

2013.aspx (accessed 04/09/2019); Laurence Oliphant, "Life in a Druse Village", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 136, No. 830 (December 1884), 705-715, p. 705

[180] The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, "Alice in the Holyland: Painters from the Oliphant Circle", https://www.imj.org.il/en/exhibitions/alice-holyland (accessed 05/09/2019)

[181] Friends of Zion Museum, "About the FOZ Museum", https://www.fozmuseum.com/about-us/ (accessed 05/09/2019)

[182] Friends of Zion Museum, "Laurence Oliphant: Embedded in Israel's National Anthem", https://www.fozmuseum.com/explore-foz/laurence-oliphant-embedded-in-israels-national-anthem/ (accessed 04/09/2019)

[183] Rechavam Zeevy, "Editor's Introduction" in Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa or Life in the Holy Land 1882-1885* (Jerusalem: Canaan Publishing House, 1976), i-x, p. ix

positions, including the expulsion of all Palestinians from Israel and a "Greater Israel" including land east of the Jordan, were prefigured in *The Land of Gilead*.[184]

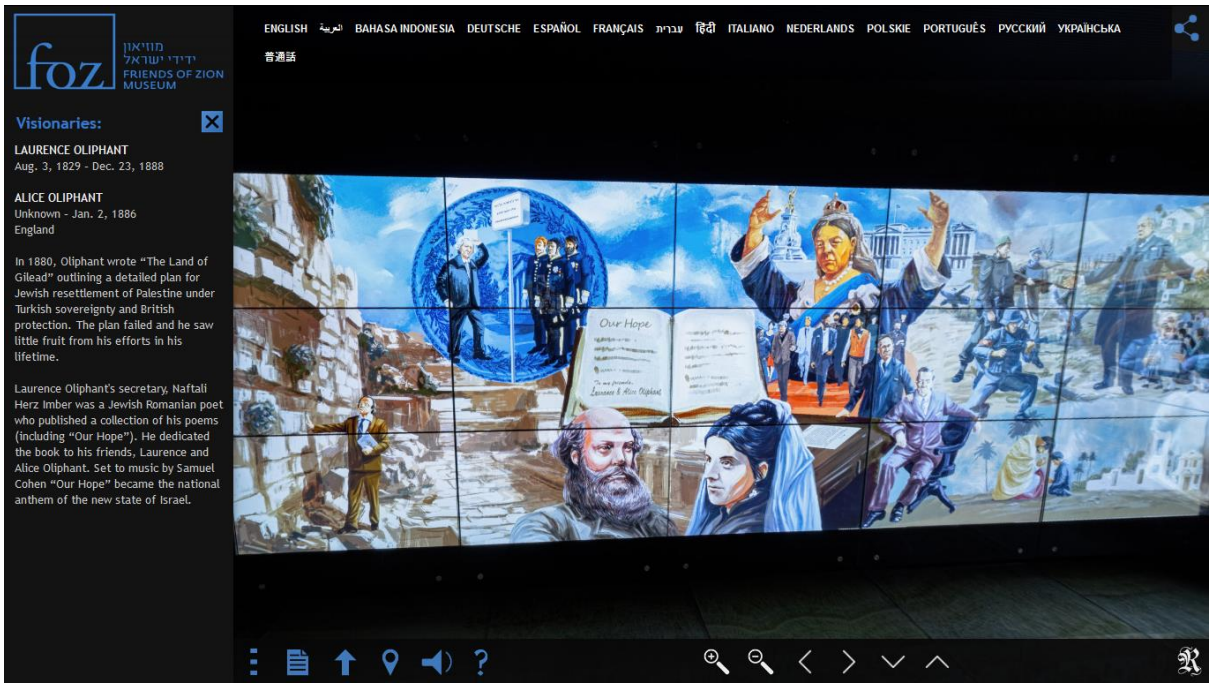


**Figure 11.8:**
**Screenshot of Friends of Zion Museum exhibition (virtual and physical) on Laurence and Alice Oliphant (centre, bottom), http://fozhc.net/tour.php (accessed 04/09/2019)**

Oliphant has also been immortalised in various forms of media. In 2010, he appeared as a character in the Israeli film *Gei Oni* (Hebrew: Valley of Strength), a romanticised tale of the First *Aliyah*. In 2012, a two-day performance on Oliphant's life entitled *In the Land of Gilead* was held at the Israeli Centre for Digital Art, which sought to reveal 'Oliphant's life story […] as well as his spiritual world'.[185] In the same year, he was the subject of a novel, *Nefesh Homiya* (Hebrew: Yearning Soul), by bestselling Israeli author Ram Oren, who envisaged a love affair between Alice Oliphant and Imber.[186] Accounts of Oliphant's story regularly occur in the Israeli press.

[184] Suzanne Goldenberg, "Far-right leader who fell victim to his own ideas", *The Guardian* (18 October 2001), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/18/israel2 (accessed 04/08/17)
[185] The Israeli Center for Digital Art, "In the Land of Gilead: Oliphant's Odyssey", https://www.digitalartlab.org.il/skn/c6/המרכז_הישראלי_לאמנות/In_the_Land_of_Gilead_Oliphant_s_Odyssey?localeId=en-us (accessed 05/09/2019)
[186] See Ram Oren, "Alice, Her Husband, Her Lover and 'Hatikva'", *Ha'aretz* (9 February 2012), http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/alice-her-husband-her-lover-and-hatikva-1.411987 (accessed 04/08/17)

These efforts have kept Oliphant's name alive in Israel today.[187] Yet more significantly, many of his ideas presented in *The Land of Gilead* have been adopted in Zionist settler colonial practices. Oliphant's writing and work supporting the Zionist movement moved proto-Zionist discourse forwards to an approximation of settler colonialism as it would occur in Palestine. He presented a blueprint for the colonisation of Palestine which proved compelling to many early Zionists: at once a utopian vision and a practical solution to anti-Semitism in Europe which would receive the support of the European powers; at once a dream of unbridled settlement in an unpopulated land, and a treatise on coloniser-indigenous relations, up to advocating ethnic cleansing, without which his plans would not have been applicable.

Despite the fact that, unlike the Finns' Kerem Avraham, Oliphant was unable to realise his grandiose colonisation plans, and for decades after the Zionist movement was unable to replicate the settlement strategies he recommended, in time the State of Israel was able to put much of Oliphant's vision into practice. The very textuality of Oliphant's Gilead plan was its strength, as Oliphant could construct a colony perfect in its abstraction, intricate in its detail, and a blueprint for the Zionist movement to follow for decades. In 1948, the ethnic cleansing of the *Nakba* actualised the expulsion of the indigenous population advocated in *The Land of Gilead*, and left most of Mandate Palestine available for colonisation. In 1967, the *Naksa* gave the Zionist movement access to other territories which Oliphant had envisaged for colonisation, and also to a captive Palestinian workforce whose exploitation too Oliphant had recommended. Oliphant's text, more than any other travelogue considered in this

[187] I had personal experience of this in April 2019, when attempting to cross the Sheikh Hussein Bridge from Jordan into northern Israel. Before making the journey from London to Amman, Jordan, I contacted the administrative staff of Beit Oliphant in Daliat al-Karmel to arrange a visit to the site once I was in Israel, telling them I was a historical researcher. Responding to my email, a staff member informed me that Beit Oliphant was officially closed for renovations, but provided their phone number and said that if I called in advance, they would be able to open the building for me. I printed out a copy of the email to show to the Israeli border security, to demonstrate my researcher credentials, as I had experienced difficulties entering Israel in the past.
Arriving on the Israeli side of the crossing, I passed through security and a bag check before being told to wait, all the other passengers of the bus I had travelled in passing through the border without problems. Standing at the counter, with the border officials behind glass, I was interrogated about the purpose of my visit to Israel, what I had done on previous visits, etc. My interrogator for this part of the process (which overall lasted several hours and involved at least three officials) was a short and quite swarthy bearded man, whom I observed speaking in fluent Arabic with several of the Palestinian citizens of Israel who were passing through the crossing.
When he inquired about my return flight and hotel reservations, I handed him the printouts of documents containing this information, and a copy of the email concerning Beit Oliphant. When he asked me about the unexplained sheet of paper, I told him I was a researcher and hoped to visit sites relating to the nineteenth century. He showed the email to a female colleague sitting at the next desk. They conversed a few sentences in Hebrew, and I heard the man mention Naftali Herz Imber, demonstrating at least a passing awareness of Oliphant and his influence on the Zionist movement.
Trying to appear friendly, I interjected, "I see you remember your history lessons from school". The man smiled noncommittally. Ultimately, neither my comment nor my arrangement to see Beit Oliphant helped me; I was denied entry to Israel, and returned to the Jordanian side of the border.

thesis, cast a long shadow as the most influential of manifestoes for settler colonialism in Palestine.

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One particularly sinister and tragi-comic episode was narrated by John Kelman in *The Holy Land*. 'Passing through a village some distance off the usual route of travellers', he wrote, 'we were surrounded with villagers who asked the dragoman why we had come. "To take away your country!" was the answer, and it was met with peals of laughter'.[188] Yet this was no idle boast. Colonisation formed an ever-present subtext in many of the travelogues, and frequently an overt theme. Whether travellers were making arguments for a British takeover of Palestine, representing in generally positive terms the settler colonial enterprises they encountered in Palestine, or presenting their own detailed plans, their travelogues frequently departed from the normal sense of a travel text and entered a more ideological and political domain.

Feeding into travellers' belief in the colonial future of Palestine was a melange of sometimes contradictory influences: the moral justness of Britain taking control of the Holy Land, something apparently desired by the indigenous Palestinians; concern over the Eastern Question and belief in the superiority of the British Empire; the "modernising" influence of the European Protestant settler colonies in Palestine; and, above all, the predicted "return" of the Jews, the form of colonisation which really mattered. Metropolitan and settler colonisation were mixed together in travellers' minds, even in Oliphant's projected Gilead colony. Nevertheless, the colonisation theories and practices of Oliphant, the Finns and other travellers strongly influenced and closely anticipated the subsequent path of Zionist settler colonialism. Oliphant's *The Land of Gilead* was a bridge between the travelogue and the colonisation tract, between the proto-Zionism of British Evangelical travellers in Palestine and the nascent Jewish-led Zionist movement. No mere Orientalist text, *The Land of Gilead* exerted a real influence on Palestine's history, felt most tragically by the Palestinian people.

[188] John Kelman and John Fulleylove, *The Holy Land* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), p. 215

## CHAPTER TWELVE

## 'All These English Christian Authorities': Conclusion

On September 29th, 1912, Herbert Bentwich was irritated. Bentwich (1856-1932) was a leading British Zionist of his generation, the founder of the British Zionist Federation in the late nineteenth century, member of the central committee of the Zionist Organisation and, in later life, himself a settler in Palestine. What provoked Bentwich's annoyance was an article in the previous day's *Times*, which had the affrontery to suggest that Zionist colonists in Palestine owed their allegiance not to Britain but Germany, and that the Zionist movement as a whole had 'a predominantly German-Jewish character'. In a sharp retort to the *Times*, Bentwich reeled off a plethora of evidence to the contrary: 'the great bulk of the commerce which has been stimulated by the Jewish settlers' was with Britain; in the face of difficulties posed by the Ottoman Empire to colonisation in Palestine, the 1902 El Arish plan for a colony in British-occupied Sinai had earned Britain the 'grateful memory' of 'the Palestine settlers'; and, considering that 'the Russian Jew is everywhere an Anglophil [sic]', the 'predominantly Russo-Jewish character'– not German – of Zionism meant that the Jewish settlers 'look to England as their best friend'. One other point was prominent:

> As to sentiment, the Zionist movement, from its conception, has looked with a special affection towards England, which has always shown a vivid interest in everything affecting the Holy Land. It was Englishmen like Colonel Conder and Lawrence [sic] Oliphant who gave the most active service in the first colonization movement in Palestine […][1]

Bentwich was not alone among Zionist leaders in extolling the role of British non-Jews who travelled to Palestine in forming the ethos of Zionism. After the First World War, in the course of which Ottoman power had dramatically collapsed, and Britain had lifted many of the barriers to Jewish settler colonisation, Nahum Sokolow in his *History of Zionism* restated the point. Praising Conder, Warren and other 'men who for many years had made the scientific exploration of Palestine their sole aim', Sokolow

[1] Herbert Bentwich, "Jewish Colonization in Palestine. Aspects of the Movement.", *Times* (7 October 1912), p. 5

expressed unequivocally that 'all these English Christian authorities put forward in the most definite and clearest terms what we know as political Zionism'.[2]

Bentwich and Sokolow both wrote with an agenda, to influence the British establishment in favour of Zionism; however, their words reflect Zionism's genuine debt to the British travellers of the Peaceful Crusade before 1914. Through individuals such as Bentwich and his son the Mandate official Norman, the ideas developed by travellers in their texts infused into the British political establishment which sought to reshape Palestine from 1917 to 1948. Through the likes of Sokolow, the views of 'English Christian authorities' and their articulations of colonisation, also impacted the Zionist movement. British and European Zionist activists eagerly read not only the texts covering Palestine's 'scientific exploration', but also the political pro-colonisation writings of Warren. They attended the lectures of Conder, who advised would-be settlers how to establish colonies. Eastern European Jews who emigrated to Palestine met Oliphant, who provided their colonies with financial support. In Jerusalem, the Finns' Kerem Avraham farm survived until the early 1930s as a model in some respects for the agricultural Zionist settlements. The Zionist movement and the State of Israel have acknowledged the influence of some of these British figures, from Sokolow's gushing tribute in 1919, until the present, as expressed in the words of Netanyahu's speech at Beit Oliphant and the bricks and mortar of the Friends of Zion Museum.

Most significantly, attitudes towards Palestinians with origins particularly in nineteenth-century Britain, which received their initial expression in travellers' accounts, continue to be reflected in the oppressive structures – physical as well as political – of settler colonialism in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel. With a bitterly apposite irony, as a distant but direct result of the Western interest in Palestine in the late Ottoman era and the processes of colonisation which ensued, residents and visitors in Palestine/Israel today find a landscape increasingly unrecognisable from how it was described in the travelogues. 'The glittering freshness of the sward, and the abounding masses of flowers' of Kinglake's Sharon now thus lie under Tel Aviv's suburbs and commuter towns.[3] As Amos Oz quotes the right-wing Revisionist Zionist-turned-'leftist dove' Amos Kenan:

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[2] Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), Volume 1, pp. 230, 231

[3] Alexander W. Kinglake [anonymous], *Eothen, or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East* (London: John Ollivier, 1844), p. 152

> boulders at the top, cyclamen, hyssop. It was there […] You pass tens of thousands of stereo systems, tens of thousands of wall-to-wall carpeting… hundreds of thousands of acres of wallpaper… a sea of Formica countertops and forests of television antennas. That is what the Sharon plain once was and this is what it is now.[4]

But it is not just the urban sprawl of Israeli towns and the more constrained growth of the ghettoised Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps in their shadows which have altered the landscape. In the Palestinian territories, 'Israel's architecture of occupation', as Eyal Weizman puts it, has transformed the landscape with not only 'a multitude of temporary, transportable, deployable and removable border-synonyms' such as checkpoints, roadblocks, fences and walls, but also settlements and settler-only roads which dissect the West Bank.[5] As the Palestinian walker Raja Shehadeh writes,

> The damage caused to the land by the infrastructural work […], with enormous amounts of concrete poured to build entire cities in hills that had remained untouched for centuries, is not difficult to appreciate. I witnessed this complete transformation near where I grew up […]. Beautiful wadis [Arabic: seasonal riverbed], springs, cliffs and ancient ruins were destroyed, by those who claim a superior love of the land.[6]

These settlements are a grotesque projection of the imaginary time when British travellers and Zionist leaders believed that, as Stanley proclaimed, 'every hill was crowned with a flourishing town or village'.[7] Their infrastructure makes journeys between the core "Biblical" sites which attracted the travellers of the Peaceful Crusade, the cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, Nablus and more, difficult and sometimes impossible, particularly for local Palestinians. A journey along the ancient road from Jerusalem to Nazareth, traversed without any barriers by innumerable travellers in the period of this thesis and for centuries before, today might be blocked by any one of a multitude of military checkpoints within the West Bank, and is impassable to Palestinian residents of the West Bank at the crossing into pre-1967 Israel between Jenin and Nazareth (the whole area is out of reach for inhabitants of

[4] Amos Oz, *The Slopes of Lebanon* (London: Vintage, 1991), pp. 212-213
[5] Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London: Verso, 2017), p. 6
[6] Raja Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* (London: Profile Books, 2008), p. xviii
[7] Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1875 [1856]), p. 120

the open-air prison of the Gaza Strip and for refugees outside Palestine). These facts cannot be glossed over in travel writing today. When a more recent British traveller, the comedian Mark Thomas, visited Palestine in 2010, his travel took the form of a walk along Israel's "separation barrier" – also known as the apartheid wall – snaking around and within the West Bank, which he accuses in his *Extreme Rambling* of being 'no mere protective shield but a military entity which, if completed […] has the added intent on destroying a possible Palestinian state'.[8] Thomas's British forebears less sympathetic to Palestinians, not only Balfour and the subsequent Mandate officials but the travellers of the late Ottoman era, bear part of the responsibility for this situation.

Finn, Conder and Oliphant were the travellers most relevant to the later British occupation and Zionist settler colonialism of Palestine. Their texts, ideas and plans may well have exerted a stronger influence over those following them to Palestine, bearing not only Bibles and notebooks but guns and ploughs, than works more "popular" in character, or obscure, or by eccentrics or Evangelicals whose obsession with the Jews' "return" was so overpowering that their works became marginalised. Yet this thesis has tried to demonstrate, through the presentation of layer upon layer of quotations from different texts upon similar themes, that virtually all the texts discussed – a small fraction of all the Palestine travelogues produced in Britain, which in turn were only part of all the texts on Palestine written in the West – shared key elements of a discourse which spanned a genre. Whether a semi-humorous text by Kinglake or a pious missive by Herschell; a dismissive and Eurocentric evaluation like Thackeray's or a relatively insightful account such as Mary Rogers's; a dry work of Biblical topography by Stanley or a lavishly illustrated set like *Picturesque Palestine*; a record of British diplomacy like Finn's memoir or an account of a confirmed eccentric like Goodrich-Freer; a large majority of texts expressed the same assumptions about Palestine, and used a common vocabulary to do so.

This notwithstanding, there were many contradictions in the body of travelogues (sometimes within a single travelogue) aspects of the representation of Palestine and its people. Damaging the travelogues' credibility as supposedly accurate portrayals of Palestine 'brought home to England', there was absence of consensus on virtually every significant aspect of Palestine's existence in the period. Muslims could be violent and fanatically intolerant of Westerners, but they were also desirous of a Western

[8] Mark Thomas, *Extreme Rambling: Walking Israel's Barrier. For Fun.* (London: Ebury Press, 2011), p. 335

occupation and would be grateful collaborators with a British colonial regime. Christians were the most Westernised and "civilised" of all the population, yet also posed the greatest threat to the further spread of Western civilisation. Jews could be painted as the noble remnant of the proud Israelites, or a degraded community not worthy of their inheritance of Palestine until their character was reformed. Palestine's land was alternately either desolate wasteland, or a luxuriantly fertile region already highly farmed by the *fellahin*.

Yet incompatible as these representations were, they all relied upon the same basic assumption of the superiority of Western travellers over Palestinians and other non-Western, non-Protestant peoples they encountered, and often – with a significance that has perhaps been overlooked in historical analyses of Western involvement in Palestine in the late Ottoman period – upon the assumption that the Holy Land was soon to fall under British domination, paving the way for the Jews' "return". As this thesis has shown, this notion was prominent decades before the Balfour Declaration and before Britain undertook the wartime manoeuvres for Palestine's occupation. It was expressed not only as a wistful thought, but also in detailed proposals by individuals who believed themselves qualified to plan Palestine's future. By drawing upon under-analysed sources which demonstrate the extent to which traveller-writers both devised a discursive mode of representation to justify Palestine's occupation and articulated their thoughts as to how this could really be done, this thesis has aimed to assert the importance of British involvement in Palestine before 1917 for later developments extending even to the present, and also demonstrate the necessity of studying "cultural" or literary documents such as travelogues, in addition to the "political" documents of state archives.

Despite the Orientalist assumptions, racist bias and colonial agenda which alternately lurk just beneath the surface of the texts and emerge evident upon their pages, the writings of nineteenth and twentieth century travellers have continued to influence the way Palestine is perceived in the West. Israeli state institutions, academics, and supporters of Israel with a public platform, including Christian Zionists in North America who have inherited the perspective of earlier Western travellers, have propagated an impression of pre-twentieth-century Palestine as a blank canvas, primed for whatever Zionist settlers wished to paint upon it. This allegation has served to delegitimise the claims of the Palestinian people for their human and political rights ever since their dispossession in 1948. A noteworthy example is the infamous 1984

work *From Time Immemorial*, a bestselling presentation for a predominantly American audience of a range of Israel's national myths.[9] Its author Joan Peters weaponised nineteenth century texts to score points in the cultural and political battle in the West around the contemporary Palestine-Israel conflict. Peters relied on the accounts of Conder, Finn, Manning, Oliphant and Tristram, among other Western travellers, to "prove" her assertions on Palestine of the calibre of 'the Holy Land was inhabited only sparsely in the nineteenth century', and 'the non-Jewish, particularly the Muslim, peoples who did inhabit the land […] could not possibly have constituted a substantial indigenous "Palestinian" population'.[10] Not only do such claims have pernicious political implications, but the "research" based upon Western travellers' accounts from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also contradicts the picture produced from research on an alternative array of sources of the same period, especially those produced by Palestinians themselves. If we are to heed Doumani's call for 'writing Palestinians back into history', particularly Palestine's Ottoman history, Western sources can only be read in light of the knowledge of the existence of a complex indigenous society, tragically disrupted by the *Nakba*.[11]

Palestine and the Palestinians were deserving of far better representation than what they received from the West in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their national narrative of historical presence on the land and subsequent dispossession continue to deserve better representation today. Most importantly, old clichés, distortions and outright lies have acted to silence Palestinians' efforts to define their own identity and to present their narrative to the world. As the Palestinian-American novelist Susan Abulhawa stated in a 2015 interview with the BBC, Palestinians still must struggle for 'the right to tell one's own story in one's own voice, not having other people speak for you and about you, which has been the case for decades for Palestinians'.[12] A review of the nineteenth-century literature on Palestine produced in Britain shows that this has been the case for centuries.

The history and the present of the Arabic-speaking Muslim and Christian indigenous people of Palestine are still erased by the world's most powerful and

[9] For a critique of this work, see Edward Said, "Conspiracy of Praise", *MERIP Reports*, No. 136/137, "West Bank, Gaza, Israel: Marching toward Civil War" (October-December 1985), 35-38
[10] Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p. 196. For mentions of the travellers named, see pp. 90-91, 159, 160-161, 203
[11] Beshara Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians into History," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Winter, 1992), 5-28
[12] Susan Abulhawa and Anne McElvoy, "Susan Abulhawa on Palestinian Women", *BBC World Service Arts Hour* (16 June 2015), https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02tvrtl (accessed 16/02/20)

privileged strata, just as they were by the travellers of the past. As this conclusion was being written, the Trump administration's "deal of the century" was announced, a "peace plan" which imposes upon the Palestinian people, without any semblance of consultation with them or their leadership, the continuation of Israeli occupation of over 60 per cent of the West Bank, the abrogation of any claim for Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem, and the denial of the right of return for Palestinian refugees to their ancestral lands, among other flagrant injustices.[13] In a televised interview, Trump's senior advisor Jared Kushner, who had been deeply involved in authoring the plan with the Israeli government, advised Palestinians to 'try to divorce yourself from all of the history that's happened over the years' and accept the imposition of the deal's terms.[14] Kushner's patronising and offensive words are nothing but the contemporary political manifestation of attitudes formed long ago, for which there are few better examples than the genre of travelogues discussed in this thesis. In the light of Palestine's more-than-a-century of British colonisation, Zionist settler colonisation and Israeli occupation, and the influence of the preceding Western discourse on Palestine on this long period of suffering, it seems justified to quote in relation to the travelogues the words of Claude Lévi-Strauss, that 'the primary function of writing […] is to facilitate the enslavement of other human beings'.[15]

[13] See Rashid Khalidi, "No deal: why Trump's plan for Palestine will only create more conflict", *The Guardian* (30 January 2020), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/30/no-deal-why-trumps-plan-for-palestine-will-only-create-more-conflict (accessed 03/02/20)
[14] Christiane Amanpour and Jared Kushner, "CNN International: Interview with Jared Kushner, Aired January 28, 2020 – 15:30 ET", http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/2001/28/se.18.html (accessed 03/02/20)
[15] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (New York: Criterion Books, 1962), p. 292

# APPENDIX

## Traveller Biographies

This appendix presents brief biographies of some of the most important traveller-writers whose works are discussed in this thesis, where significant further information about their lives could be found.

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**BARTLETT, William Henry** (b. 1809 London, d. 1854 off Malta) Apprenticed in 1822 to an architect, making drawings for engraving. After 1829 worked for various publishers and began illustrating travel books in 1836. For the rest of his life, travelled extensively and illustrated regions around Britain Europe, Mediterranean, Ottoman Empire and North America. Wrote and illustrated twelve books altogether. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Walks About the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (1844). ***Biographical Source:*** Alexander M. Ross, "Bartlett, William Henry" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), Vol. 8, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id_nbr=3768 (accessed 14/03/20)

**BODDY, Alexander Alfred** (b. 1854 Manchester, d. 1930 County Durham) Son of Church of England rector, initially trained as solicitor before studying theology at University of Durham and ordained priest in 1881. Whilst acting as parish priest, travelled and wrote extensively in Europe, Russia, Mediterranean, North Africa as well as Palestine. Subsequently became leading figure in Pentecostalism in Britain until First World War, though remained within C of E. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Days in Galilee* (1900). ***Biographical source:*** William K. Kay, "Boddy, Alexander Alfred" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-100434?&mediaType=Article (accessed 15/03/20)

**BURTON, Isabel** (b. 1831 London, d. 1896 London) Born Isabel Arundell to aristocratic Catholic family. Married British diplomat, explorer, Orientalist and writer Richard Francis Burton 1861. Accompanied husband to Santos, Brazil in 1865, then to Damascus when Richard appointed Vice-Consul in 1868. Richard recalled in 1871, after which the couple lived in Trieste and travelled in India and elsewhere. Isabel wrote several travel accounts and edited (often heavily censoring) her husband's works including after his death, and was active in cause of prevention of cruelty to animals. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land* (1875). ***Biographical sources:*** James Sutherland Cotton, "Burton, Isabel" in *Dictionary of National Biography, 1901*

*Supplement* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1901), Vol. 1, pp. 348-349; James Sutherland Cotton, "Burton, Richard Francis", *Dictionary of National Biography, 1901 Supplement* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1901), Vol. 1, 349-356

**CHARLES, Elizabeth Rundle** (b. 1828, Tavistock, d. 1896, London) Born Elizabeth Rundle, daughter of MP for Tavistock, Devon. prolific writer and author of 50 books, most with Christian theme. Lifelong Anglican and supporter of a Broad Church. Travelled with her husband to Egypt, Palestine and around Mediterranean. Subsequently became friends with Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. In later life, able to live off the proceeds of her writing and dedicate herself to philanthropy. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas* (1862). ***Biographical source:*** Elizabeth Lee, "Charles, Elizabeth", *Dictionary of National Biography, 1901 Supplement* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1901), Vol. 1, 417-419

**CONDER, Claude Reignier** (b. 1848 Cheltenham, d. 1910 Cheltenham) Studied University of London, entered Royal Military Academy at Woolwich 1870. Distinguished as draftsman and surveyor, commissioned Lieutenant of Royal Engineers. Appointed in command of Palestine Exploration Fund's Survey of Western Palestine, arrived in Palestine July 1872. Returned to Britain after Survey party attacked near Safad July 1875 and worked on publishing Survey's map. Close friend of Herbert Kitchener, with whom he worked on SWP. Returned in 1881 for Survey of Eastern Palestine until poor British-Ottoman relations ended Survey. Subsequently became active supporter of Zionism, writing on subject in magazines and giving speeches for English Zionist League, also wrote numerous books on Palestine. Served with British Army in Egypt against 'Urabi Pasha 1882, then served across British Empire including India. Received honorary degree from Edinburgh University for his research in Palestine. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *Tent Work in Palestine* (1878); "The Haven of Carmel" (1879); "The Present Condition of Palestine" (1879); contributions to *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (1881); *Heth and Moab* (1885); *The Survey of Eastern Palestine* (1889); "Jewish Colonies in Palestine" (1891); *The Possibilities of Palestine* (1905); "The Future of Palestine" (1907); *The City of Jerusalem* (1909). ***Biographical source:*** Eliahu Elath, "Claude Reignier Conder", *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, Vol. 97, No. 1 (1965), 21-41

**DIXON, William Hepworth** (b. 1821 Manchester, d. 1879 London) Born to old Lancashire Puritan family. Began literary career in 1840s, writing on social issues in journals. Trained as barrister in London though never practised. Appointed deputy-commissioner for Great Exhibition in 1851. Became editor of leading journal *Athenæum* in 1853. Wrote several historical works on royal and aristocratic subjects. Travelled to Palestine 1863, subsequently helped found Palestine Exploration Fund, member of executive committee and later chairman. Subsequently travelled and wrote on North America, Europe and

Cyprus. Took paternalistic interest in working people and campaigned for Tower of London to be opened to workers free of charge. In 1870s, wrote articles advocating Britain's purchase of Egypt from Ottoman Empire; purchased Ottoman stocks and lost most of his assets. Published anti-communist tract under pseudonym Onslow Yorke in 1872. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *The Holy Land* (1865); *Secret History of "The International" Working Men's Association* (1872). ***Biographical source:*** William Charles Mark Kent, "Dixon, William Hepworth", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 15, 128-130

**FINN, James** (b. 1806 London, d. 1872 London) Father was Irish Catholic-turned-Protestant, mother English Wesleyan. As child, attracted attention of Earl of Clarendon, a strong Evangelical; through him, Finn gained positions as tutor to members of the establishment. Fascinated with Jewish history and Hebrew from early age. Began in late 1830s to write on Jewish topics and become involved in efforts to convert Jews. Elected member of committee of London Jews Society in 1841, became close to prominent LJS member Alexander McCaul. In 1845, Finn appointed second British Consul in Jerusalem and married McCaul's daughter Elizabeth Ann, resigning his membership of LJS though not his interest in Jews. The Finns arrived in Jerusalem 1846 and remained without leaving Palestine once until 1863. Heavily involved in projects such as the Jerusalem Literary Society and Kerem Avraham farm. Eventually recalled to Britain after murder of Peter Meshullam and disputes at the Artas millenarian settlement. Continued to involve himself in Jewish and Palestinian affairs in London, and write his memoirs and accounts of his life in Palestine. After his death, Elizabeth active in raising support for Kerem Avraham and settler-colonial ventures until 1921. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *Byeways in Palestine* (1868); *Stirring Times* (1878). ***Biographical sources:*** Beth-Zion Lask Abrahams, "James Finn: Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem Between 1846 and 1863", *Transactions & Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 27 (1978-1980), 40-50; Falastin Naili, "The Millenarist Settlement in Artas and its support network in Britain and North America, 1845-1878", *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 45 (Spring 2011), 43-56

**GOODRICH-FREER, Ada** (b. 1857 Uppingham, d. 1931 New York) Daughter of a veterinary surgeon, though throughout her life was a habitual liar and posed as a Yorkshire aristocrat. Active member of the Society for Psychical Research, publishing under pseudonyms, until expelled in 1897 after involvement in a number of controversial incidents including supposed ghost sightings. "Wrote" a number of plagiarised works on the Hebrides. Moved to Jerusalem in 1901 where she married her husband, an American reverend (who believed her twenty years younger than actual age). Lived in Cairo from 1911 and United States from 1923. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *Inner Jerusalem* (1904); *In a Syrian Saddle* (1905). ***Biographical source:*** J.L. Campbell, "Freer, Ada Goodrich",

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-46548 (accessed 18/03/20)

**HERSCHELL, Ridley Haim** (b. 1807 Strzelno, d. 1864 Brighton) Born to devout Jewish family in Prussian Poland. As child, strongly influenced by his rabbi grandfather. Studied at rabbinical school and then University of Berlin. Travelled in Europe and became attracted by Protestant Christianity. Baptised in 1830 by Bishop of London, adopted the name Ridley after one of his sponsors. Subsequently dedicated himself to missionary work among Jews. Opened a church in London 1838, remained independent of though ideologically close to Nonconformist Evangelical sects. Continued to travel to Europe and Palestine and write on religious subjects, often connected to Jewish conversion to Christianity. Founded organisations British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews and the Evangelical Alliance. Some children became prominent members of British political establishment. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *A Visit to My Father-Land* (1843). ***Biographical source:*** Ghetal Burdon-Sanderson, "Herschell, Ridley-Haim", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 26, 274-275

**KINGLAKE, Alexander William** (b. 1809 Taunton, d. 1891 London) Member of aristocratic family with estate in Somerset. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was friends with Tennyson and Thackeray (as well as Warburton). Travelled to Palestine and Egypt around 1835, his published account of journey appearing nine years later. Practiced as barrister though more interested in military history. Travels to Algeria to witness French occupation in 1845. In 1854, accompanies British forces to Crimea; publishes monumental history of Crimean War in eight volumes 1863 to 1887. Liberal MP for Bridgewater 1857 to 1868. Member of elite establishment and travellers' clubs in London. Remained close friend of Laurence Oliphant. ***Work cited in thesis*****:** *Eothen* (1844). ***Biographical source:*** Leslie Stephen, "Kinglake, Alexander William", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 31, 171-173

**MACGREGOR, John** (b. 1825 Gravesend, d. 1892 Bournemouth) Son of inspector-general of police in Ireland, strongly religious as a child and initially wished to become a missionary. Educated at Trinity College, Dublin and Trinity College Cambridge. Practised for some time as barrister, but had enough money to devote himself to travelling. Travelled across Europe to Egypt and Palestine for nine months 1849-1850. Subsequently travelled in Russia, North Africa and North America. Began canoeing in 1865 in his *Rob Roy* canoe, successfully writing of (and illustrating) travels in Europe and, in 1868-1869, Palestine and Eastern Mediterranean. Active philanthropist, supporting Shaftesbury's

campaign for children's education, became vice-president of Ragged School Union in 1851, and member of the London School Board in the 1870s. Member of numerous Evangelical organisations such as the British and Foreign Bible Society. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* (1869). ***Biographical source:*** C.A. Harris and Elizabeth Baigent, "Macgregor, John [*called* Rob Roy]", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-17522 (accessed 19/03/20)

**MACLEOD, Norman** (b. 1812 Campbelltown, d. 1872 Glasgow) Son (and grandson) of parish ministers in Scotland. Studied divinity in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Became licentiate of Church of Scotland and parish minister in 1838. Remained within the CoS throughout 1843 schism, subsequently became successful minister and writer on religious issues and became involved in foreign missionary work. Among founders of Evangelical Alliance in 1847. Active in philanthropic works for the poor in Glasgow. Appointed chaplain to Victoria in 1857. Appointed Doctor of Divinity by Glasgow University. Founded monthly magazine in London 1860. appointed convener of the India mission of the CoS 1864; travelled to Egypt and Palestine in same year. Visited India missions in 1867 and wrote account of journey. Moderator of CoS General Assembly 1869. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Eastward* (1866). ***Biographical source:*** Thomas Hamilton, "Macleod, Norman", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 35, 217-218

**MANNING, Samuel** (b. 1822 Leicester, d. 1881 London) Father was Mayor of Leicester and a churchwarden, though left Church of England and with family joined Baptist congregation. Samuel educated at Bristol Baptist College and Glasgow University; 1846-1861 was Baptist minister in Somerset. Wrote and edited the *Baptist Magazine*. In 1863 became general book editor of the Religious Tract Society; appointed Secretary in 1876. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *"Those Holy Fields."* (1874). ***Biographical source:*** Gordon Goodwin, "Manning, Samuel", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 36, 71

**MILLS, John** (b. 1812 Llanidloes, d. 1873 London) Early in life travelled throughout Wales establishing musical societies. Appointed minister in Ruthin 1841. Sent to London 1846 by Welsh Calvinistic Methodists as missionary to London Jews and wrote in English and Welsh on his experience. Visited Palestine 1855 with money for Jews from Welsh congregations, supportive of establishing Welsh colonies in Palestine. Lost official support for London mission in 1859 for lack of success in Jewish conversion and, allegedly, for being drawn towards conversion to Judaism. Returned to Palestine 1860 and lived amongst Samaritans in Nablus three months. Member of religious and Orientalist

societies. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Three Months' Residence at Nablus* (1864). ***Biographical sources:*** Jasmine Donahaye, *Whose People? Wales, Israel, Palestine* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), pp. 50-61; John Austin Jenkins, "Mills, John", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 37, 447

**OLIPHANT, Laurence** (b. 1829 Cape Town, d. 1888 London) Member of Scottish Highland clan, father was Attorney-General at South African Cape. Both parents fervent Evangelicals. Childhood spent in Scotland and Ceylon/Sri Lanka where father was Chief Justice, and travelling in Europe. Worked as barrister in Ceylon 1848. Travelled to Nepal 1851, published first travel account 1852. Returned to Britain and continued work in legal profession, also engaged in Shaftesbury's philanthropic activities. Visited Russia and Crimea 1852 and published another popular travel account. In North America, involved in US-Canada reciprocity treaty, subsequently acted Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Quebec. Worked as spy and journalist in Crimea during Crimean War, travelling with Ottoman forces. Travelled to US as *Times* correspondent in 1856, then 1857 with Lord Elgin to India and Far East where he witnessed several colonial assaults. Associate of Garibaldi in Italy. Briefly accepted diplomatic posting to Japan 1861. Travelled with Prince of Wales in 1862, also visited Palestine. Settled in Britain 1864, published popular novel *Piccadilly* and elected MP of Stirling Burghs 1865 though made little impact in Parliament. Left in 1867 and joined (with his mother) religious commune of Thomas Lake Harris in Brockton, New York State. Donated all his money to Harris's cult and performed menial labour. Under Harris's orders, worked as *Times* correspondent in Paris during Franco-Prussian War. There met Alice le Strange and married in 1872. Oliphant, mother and Alice returned to Harris, though Harris separated Oliphant and Alice, taking latter to San Francisco. Oliphant engaged in commercial ventures such as Direct United States Cable Company. Travelled to Eastern Mediterranean 1879 with support of British government to identify land for Jewish colony, attempted and failed to lobby Ottomans for this purpose. Subsequently involved in Mansion House Committee and humanitarian efforts in Eastern Europe for Jewish refugees; made contact with Zionist figures and organisations. Reunited with Alice and broke from Harris 1881, reclaiming his land in Brocton which had been signed over to Harris. Travelled with Alice and followers to Palestine in late 1882, settling in Haifa and Daliat al-Karmel, writing reports, fiction and esoteric religious tracts and providing support for Zionist colonists. Alice died early 1887. Oliphant travels between Haifa, US and Britain, marries Rosamond Dale Owen summer 1888, months before his own death. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *The Land of Gilead* (1880); "The Jew and the Eastern Question" (1882); "Life in a Druse Village" (1884); *Haifa* (1887). ***Biographical sources:*** Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, His Wife* (William Blackwood & Sons, 1892), 2 Vols.; Leslie Stephen, "Oliphant, Laurence", *Dictionary of*

*National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 42, 133-137; Anne Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant 1829-1888* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)

**PORTER, Josias Leslie** (b. 1823 Burt, d. 1889 Belfast) Son of Protestant minister, landowner and (in 1798) loyalist militiaman in Burt, County Donegal. Studied Glasgow and Edinburgh, became Presbyterian minister in Newcastle 1846. From 1849 to 1859 was missionary to the Jews in Damascus, wrote several travel books and guides. Later returned to travel further in the region. In 1860 became professor of biblical criticism in Belfast Presbyterian College, 1867 became College Secretary. Elected Moderator of Presbyterian General Assembly 1875. President of Queen's College Belfast 1879. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *A Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine* (1858); *The Giant Cities of Bashan* (1882); *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (1887), *"Through Samaria" to Galilee and the Jordan* (1889). ***Biographical source:*** Thomas Hamilton, "Porter, Josias Leslie", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 46, 187-188

**RIDER HAGGARD, Henry** (b. 1856 West Bradenham, d. 1925 London) Born to Norfolk gentry, at 19 travelled to South Africa to work managing household of British Lieutenant-Governor of Natal. Became head of British-occupied Transvaal 1878. Returned to Britain 1879, married, returned to South Africa to begin ostrich farming. Returned again to Britain 1881 after outbreak of Anglo-Transvaal War. Began writing fictional stories set in Africa and colonial locations, quickly found success; ultimately wrote over 50 novels. Financially secure as writer and landowner, travelled in Europe, Americas, Eastern Mediterranean and Africa. Stood unsuccessfully for Parliament but served on several royal commissions and the Empire Settlement Committee. Wrote on agricultural matters. Knighted 1912. Wrote private diaries which revealed him as 'a disillusioned imperialist with authoritarian, racist leanings, who ranted against the Jews, communists, Bolsheviks, trade unionists, the Irish, and Indian nationalists'. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *A Winter Pilgrimage* (1901). ***Biographical source:*** Morton N. Cohen, "Haggard, (Sir) Henry Rider", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-33632 (accessed 22/03/20)

**ROGERS, Mary Eliza** (b. 1827 London, d. 1910 London) Daughter of noted sculptor who worked for aristocracy and royalty. Mary also worked as sculptor and designer. Travelled to Palestine 1855 with brother Edward Thomas Rogers, Vice-Consul in Haifa, remained until 1859. Subsequently published book and articles on Eastern Mediterranean where she subsequently visited again. Edward became Minister of Education, Inspector of Prisons and Director of the Sale of State Lands in Egypt after British occupation 1881; died 1884, and Mary

raised his children. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *Domestic Life in Palestine* (1862); contributions to *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (1881). ***Biographical sources:*** Anonymous, "Edward Thomas Rogers", *The Woodcarver's Children* (n/d), https://woodcarverschildren.weebly.com/edward-thomas-rogers.html (accessed 23/03/20); Anonymous, "Mary Eliza Rogers", *The Woodcarver's Children* (n/d), https://woodcarverschildren.weebly.com/mary-eliza-rogers1.html (accessed 23/03/20); University of Glasgow, "Mary Eliza Rogers", *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951* (2011), https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=ann_1400512394 (accessed 23/03/20)

**SMITH, Agnes** (b. 1843 Irvine, d. 1926 Cambridge) Born in Scotland to wealthy Presbyterian father, remained devout throughout life. Twin sister Margaret Dunlop Gibson accompanied her throughout life, career and travels. Educated in elite boarding schools, as a woman unable to attend university but received tuition from graduates. Sisters travelled to Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Palestine in 1860s. Subsequently learned wide range of Middle Eastern languages and wrote novels. Short marriage to Cambridge fellow Reverend Samuel Savage Lewis in 1887 to his death in 1891 led to later academic Orientalist pursuits. Repeated journeys to Sinai in 1890s and 1900s researching Syriac manuscripts and publishing translations. With Margaret, funded establishment of Westminster College, Prebyterian theological college in Cambridge. Awarded honorary doctorates and medal from Royal Asiatic Society in 1915. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Eastern Pilgrims* (1870). ***Biographical source:*** Christa Müller-Kessler, "Lewis, Agnes Smith", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34510 (accessed 23/03/20)

**STANLEY, Arthur Penrhyn** (b. 1815 Alderley, d. 1881 London) Born in Gloucestershire, son of Bishop of Norwich. Educated at Rugby School and University of Oxford, excelled and won numerous prizes. Ordained 1839. Travelled in Europe 1840, subsequently travelled extensively in Africa, America and Asia. Won literary prominence with several works in 1840s. With Oxford riven by theological controversies, becomes Canon of Canterbury 1851. Toured Egypt and Palestine soon after. Appointed professor of ecclesiastical history at Oxford 1858, continued to write on ancient Jewish and Christian history. Toured Palestine with Prince of Wales 1862. Appointed Dean of Westminster Abbey 1862. Strong defender of state church. Continuing link with royalty, married the Duke of Edinburgh and the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia in St. Petersburg 1874. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Sinai and Palestine* (1856). ***Biographical source:*** Rowland Edmund Prothero, "Stanley, Arthur Penrhyn", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 54, 44-48

**THACKERAY, William Makepeace** (b. 1811 Calcutta, d. 1863 London) Descended from two generations of colonial administrators in British India, sent to England 1817. Educated at elite public school Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge, though left before graduating. Inherited large fortune from father and travelled in Europe, beginning to write and draw caricatures. Settled in Paris 1834 and worked as newspaper correspondent. After wife had mental breakdown, began publishing in early 1840s, gained particular prominence through satirical magazine *Punch*. Expressed republican and pro-Irish Home Rule sympathies. Travelled Greece, Turkey, Palestine and Egypt 1844. Gained widespread recognition as novelist with serialised publication of works such as *Vanity Fair* (1847-1848). Began lecturing early 1850s, gives tours in America and travels in Europe. Stood unsuccessfully as Liberal MP for Oxford 1857. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *Notes of a Journey* (1844). ***Biographical source:*** Leslie Stephen, "Thackeray, William Makepeace", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 56, 90-106

**TREVES, Frederick** (b. 1853 Dorchester, d. 1923 Lausanne) Studied medicine at London Hospital, qualified as member of Royal College of Surgeons 1875. Became full surgeon at London Hospital 1884, demonstrator of anatomy in attached medical school. Won prominence and prizes for his work in private practice and research. In 1880s, investigated and cared for Joseph Merrick, known as the "Elephant Man". Served as consulting surgeon for British forces during Boer War 1899, appointed Surgeon-Extraordinaire to Victoria 1900. Achieved world fame 1902 when operated on Edward VII for appendicitis. two days before coronation; created baronet the same year. Travelled extensively in Asia, West Indies, Africa, Palestine and Europe, publishing travel accounts. During First World War, served as President of War Office Medical Board, subsequently settled in France. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *The Land That Is Desolate* (1912). ***Biographical sources:*** A. Keith and D.D. Gibbs, "Treves, Sir Frederick, baronet", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36557 (accessed 24.03.20)

**TRISTRAM, Henry Baker** (b. 1822 Eglingham, d. 1906 Durham) Father was vicar in Northumberland. Studies classics at Lincoln College, Oxford, ordained 1846. Secretary to Governor of Bermuda and naval and military chaplain 1847-9, begins study of birds and shells. Rector in County Durham 1849. Travels to Algeria several times in 1850s, made ornithological collection in Sahara and gathers material for first travel account. Publicly defended Darwin's theory of evolution, attempting to reconcile it with Christian doctrine. Travels to Palestine and Egypt in late 1850s and 1860s. Receives honorary degree of LL.D. from Edinburgh, made Canon of Durham 1874. Declined post of Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem 1879 but travels more times to Palestine. Travelled to Asia and North

America. Four-decade association with Church Missionary Society. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *The Land of Israel* (1865); *The Land of Moab* (1874); contributions to *Picturesque Palestine**,** Sinai and Egypt* (1881). ***Biographical source:*** Augustus Robert Buckland, "Tristram, Henry Baker", *Dictionary of National Biography, 1912 Supplement* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1912), Vol. 3, 535-536

**WARBURTON, Eliot** (b. 1810 Tullamore, d. 1852, Bay of Biscay) Born in County Offaly, son of former Inspector-General of Constabulary in Ireland. Educated Trinity College, Cambridge, became close friend of Kinglake. Called to Irish bar 1837, but set on career of travel and writing. Toured Eastern Mediterranean in 1843. Authored several popular works in 1840s. Employed by Atlantic and Pacific Junction Company to negotiate a settlement with indigenous tribes in Panama, but died in the fire and wreck of *HMS Amazon* shortly after beginning the Atlantic voyage. ***Work cited in thesis:*** *The Crescent and the Cross* (1844). ***Biographical source:*** William Prideaux Courtney, "Warburton, Bartholomew Elliott George", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 59, 294-296

**WARREN, Charles** (b. 1840 Bangor, d. 1927 Weston-Super-Mare) Son of Major-General who fought in several colonial wars. Attended Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. Commissioned into Royal Engineers 1857. Surveyed Gibraltar 1859, worked for Palestine Exploration Fund 1867-1870. Returned to Britain due to ill health, but sent by Colonial Office to South Africa 1877, participated in Transkei War, appointed Special Commissioner for 'native questions' and administrator of Griqualand West. Sent to Sinai 1882 to search for missing archaeologist Edward Henry Palmer, subsequently instrumental in bringing Palmer's murderers to justice. Honours bestowed by British Egyptian government. Sent 1884-1885 to assert British sovereignty in South Africa. Appointed Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police 1886-1888, included suppression of socialist demonstration in Trafalgar Square Bloody Sunday November 1887, and investigating "Jack the Ripper" cases. Commander in Singapore 1889-1894. Deputy Commander-in-Chief in Boer War 1899-1900, though considered incompetent. ***Works cited in thesis:*** "Excavations at Jerusalem" (1871); *The Land of Promise* (1875); *Underground Jerusalem* (1876); *The Temple or the Tomb* (1880); contributions to *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (1881). ***Biographical source:*** Keith Surridge, "Warren, Sir Charles", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36753 (accessed 25/03/20)

**WILSON, Charles William** (b. 1836 Liverpool, d. 1905 Tunbridge Wells) Member of wealthy landowning family, appointed Lieutenant in Royal Engineers 1855.

Sent in 1858 to as secretary of commission to establish border between British Columbia and US, in North America until 1862. Worked on defence of Thames and Medway before volunteering for survey of Jerusalem 1864. Produced plans of Jerusalem 1865, leading to establishment of Palestine Exploration Fund. Returned to survey Palestine 1865-1866, elected member of Fund Executive Committee and remained active, becoming Chairman 1901. Surveyed Sinai 1868-1869, appointed director of War Office's topographical department 1870. Oversaw ordnance survey of Ireland 1876. In Serbia 1878 to determine borders under Treaty of Berlin, appointed Military Consul-General for Anatolia 1879, travelling widely and authoring travel guides. Appointed military attaché for British occupation of Egypt, in charge of prisoners of war including Ahmad 'Urabi. Travels down Nile to Sudan as head of intelligence for mission to save Charles George Gordon 1885, blamed by some for failure but widely exonerated. Made honorary LL.D. at Edinburgh University. Director-general of military education in War Office 1892-1898. Returned Palestine 1899 and 1903, interested in Calvary and Sepulchre sites. ***Works cited in thesis:*** editor of and contributions to *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt* (1881); *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre* (1906). ***Biographical source:*** Robert Hamilton Vetch, "Wilson, Charles William", *Dictionary of National Biography, 1912 Supplement* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1912), Vol. 3, 687-689

**WILSON, John** (b. 1804 Lauder, d. 1875 Bombay) Entered Edinburgh University aged 14 wishing to study for ministry. Becomes increasingly drawn to Presbyterian missionary activity, establishes Edinburgh Association of Theological Students in aid of the Diffusion of the Gospel 1825 and applies to Scottish Missionary Society. Sent to Bombay 1829, learns Marathi to preach. Establishes missionary journal *Oriental Christian Spectator*. Founds schools (especially for girls) teaching in Indian languages. One such school later known as Wilson College, elite private school in India. Holds dialogues with Hindu, Muslim and Parsi communities and publishes Orientalist works. Travels widely in India for missionary activity and acquiring manuscripts. Member of Bombay Literary Society 1830, Royal Asiatic Society 1836, Royal Society 1845. Returns to Britain 1843, visiting Palestine and Egypt on journey. Lobbies in England for increased missionary activity in India. Returned to India 1847, first missionary to travel to Sind 1849 soon after British occupation. Appointed President of Cave Temple Commission, travelling and studying antiquities. Works with government during Indian Mutiny of 1857, translating messages from rebels in various languages. Appointed Dean of Arts in University of Mumbai, examiner in Sanskrit, Persian, Hebrew, Marathi, Gujarati, and Hindi, soon became Vice-Chancellor. Consulted by government before invasion of Abyssinia 1867-1868. Returned Scotland 1870-1872, elected Moderator of Free Church of Scotland. ***Works cited in thesis:*** *The Lands of the Bible* (1847). ***Biographical source:*** Edward Irving Carlyle, "Wilson, John", *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900), Vol. 62, 113-115

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